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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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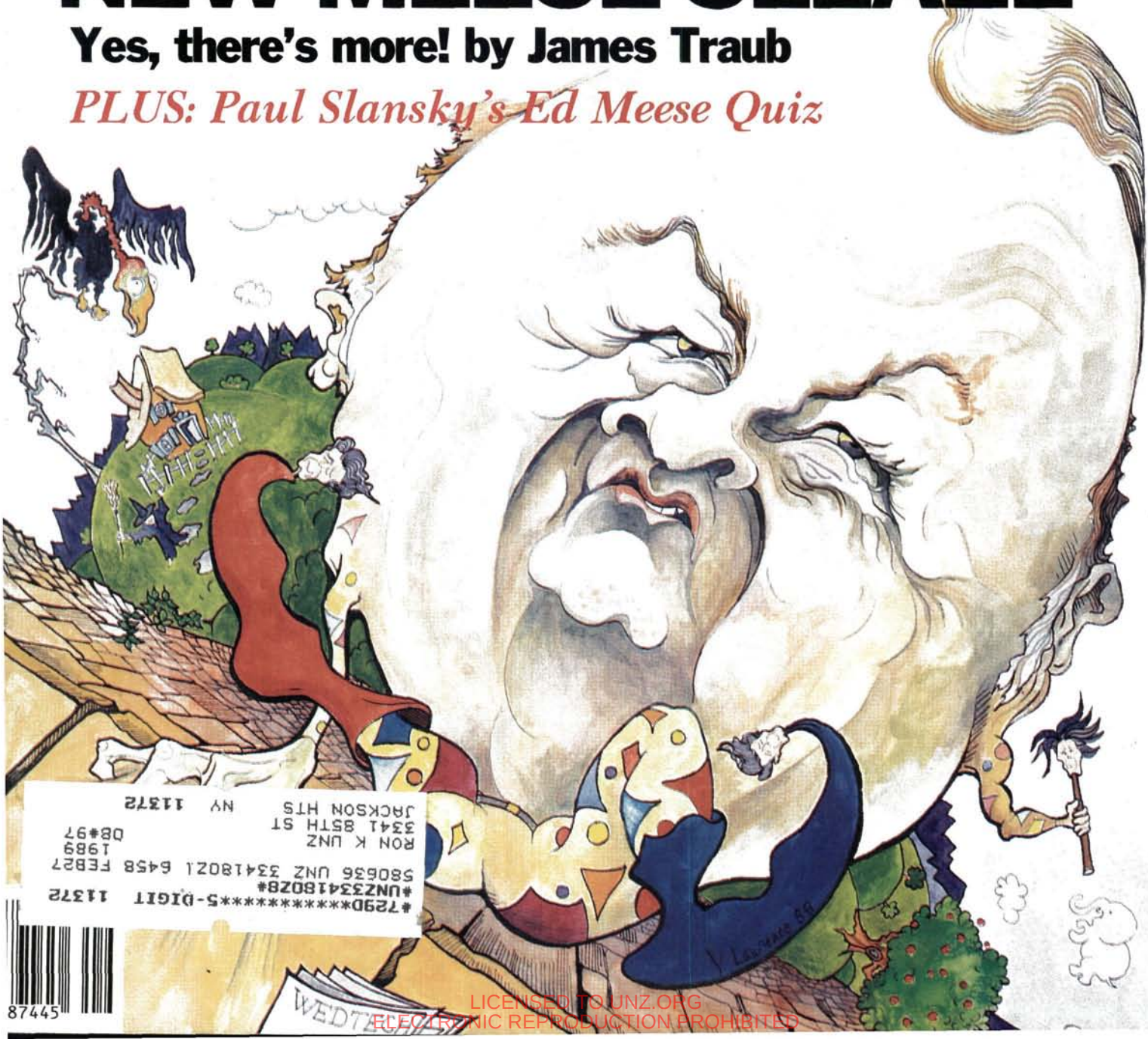

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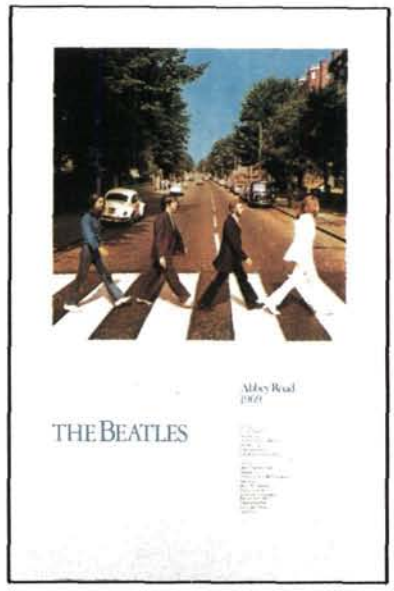

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

FOUNDED 1914 — *A Weekly Journal of Opinion* — ISSUE 3,815

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FROM WASHINGTON

MAKE MONEY, NOT WAR

The news that Roger Miranda Bengoechea is to get $800,000 from the American taxpayers raises all sorts of interesting questions. Miranda is the Nicaraguan defector the Reagan administration has been parading around Washington for the past couple months with dark tales of Sandinista malefactions.

Who sets these rates? At what point during his debriefing did Miranda figure out that he was being paid by the word, like a free-lance writer? Is the offer available to any Nicaraguan, or must one be a proven enemy of freedom to qualify? This free market approach has great promise, I think. The next step, clearly, is to take that $36 million we're not sending to the *contras* and offer it to the Sandinistas instead—provided they adjourn en masse to Miami. This would be a foreign policy initiative in keeping with the philosophy of the 1980s: "Make money, not war."

Who knows? The State Department may even have been influenced by *The Book of Questions* by Gregory Stock, Ph.D., (Workman Press), last year's best-selling compendium of puzzlers for armchair moralists. There it is, right on page 17: "Would you accept $1,000,000 to leave the country and never set foot in it again?" Gramm-Rudmanize a million bucks and $800,000 is just about on the nose.

Or maybe our boys took a hint from Yosef Shapira. Shapira, an Israeli Cabinet minister from the fringe National Religious Party, created a stir in October by proposing that Israeli Arabs be offered $20,000 each to leave the country. This set the stage for a bidding war. Sari Nusseibeh, a prominent Palestinian moderate, replied indignantly, "If he's offering $20,000 to every Arab to leave, I'm sure the Arab countries will offer $40,000 for every Jew to leave." Many Israeli Jews would gladly offer more than that for Shapira himself to leave, rightly regarding his proposal as vulgar and provocative.

Nevertheless, one West Bank Palestinian showed up at Shapira's office and said he'd be happy to leave the country for $20,000. Shapira wouldn't fork out. But who can blame this would-be expatriate? If the Jews of the Bible spent 40 years wandering in the desert, waiting to enter the promised land, the West Bank and Gaza Palestinians have now spent 40 years in suspended animation—half that time under Arab rule, half under Jewish—waiting for something similar. Meanwhile, a third generation of frustration and hatred is festering in refugee camps.

Maybe the problem with Shapira's offer is that it wasn't generous enough. Could we settle this whole thing for a million bucks apiece? There are 1.35 million Arabs in the occupied territories. Figuring that not all would take up the offer, the whole package might cost a trillion dollars. Call it $50 billion a year for 20 years. If the Israeli-Arab conflict isn't already costing the world $50 billion a year, it's pretty close. Israel, Egypt, and Syria each spend $4 billion to $5 billion on warfare each year. Add a few billion for the other Arab countries, some fraction of America's $300 billion defense budget, the hundreds of millions the U.N. spends maintaining the refugee camps, and miscellaneous costs such as worldwide airport security, not to mention the economic cost of violent death, injury and physical destruction, and the lost economic energies of war-distracted societies.

Is bribing people to give up their national dreams immoral? Two moral visions conflict here. One vision was described by political philosopher Michael Walzer in his 1983 book *Spheres of Justice*: justice requires that we keep money in its own sphere, and not permit it to dominate all aspects of life. You can't sell yourself into slavery, for example, no matter what the price.

The other vision is the basic moral logic of capitalism: if an exchange is truly voluntary, by definition it leaves the parties better off, at least by their own lights. Money is the universal solvent. Convert anything into money, and then convert your money into anything else, however seemingly incompatible. At some price, perhaps, money can even turn swords into plowshares.

The Israelis argue, with much justice, that the nations of the world absorbed millions of refugees in the aftermath of World War II (including a half million Jews expelled by Arab nations and taken in by Israel), and that only the Palestinians have held out—or been left to rot in a cynical ploy by their Arab brothers to undermine the Jewish state. After 40 years, Palestinian nationalism has become genuine. But if there is a price at which an economic solution can salve a spiritual complaint, who is to say it shouldn't be paid? Or, to rephrase *The Book of Questions*: Would you let your children grow up in squalor rather than leave your country? Few Americans would be here today if their ancestors felt that way.

There may be things money can't buy, but money in sufficient quantities can buy quite a bit. Right now, no one wants the Palestinians, including their fellow Arabs. A million-dollar dowry might change some minds. Indeed, a million dollars will get you past the immigration restrictions of many countries. Even the United States gives a limited preference to those who can invest $100,000 here.

In the vast desert expanses of the Middle East, the Palestinians could even build themselves a state, if they really want one. Not a squalid enclave cheek-by-jowl with the hated Jews, but an oasis of highways and air conditioning. The Saudis are building just such a modern complex from scratch—industry, housing, airport, everything—for 380,000 people at a cost of about $45 billion, or only $118,000 apiece. Donald Trump would love the assignment.

There are even precedents here: the Jews acquired most of the land the Palestinians now want back by buying it, not seizing it by force. The founders of Zionism also briefly considered building their state in an underpopulated chunk of Africa, rather than the holy land.

Am I serious? Oh, no. Practical problems aside (who'll pay? what about Jerusalem?), the whole idea is rationalism carried to irrational lengths. This isn't how the world works. But given how the world does work, especially in the Middle East, it hardly seems right to call this free market fantasy immoral. Bribing people certainly seems preferable to beating them. □

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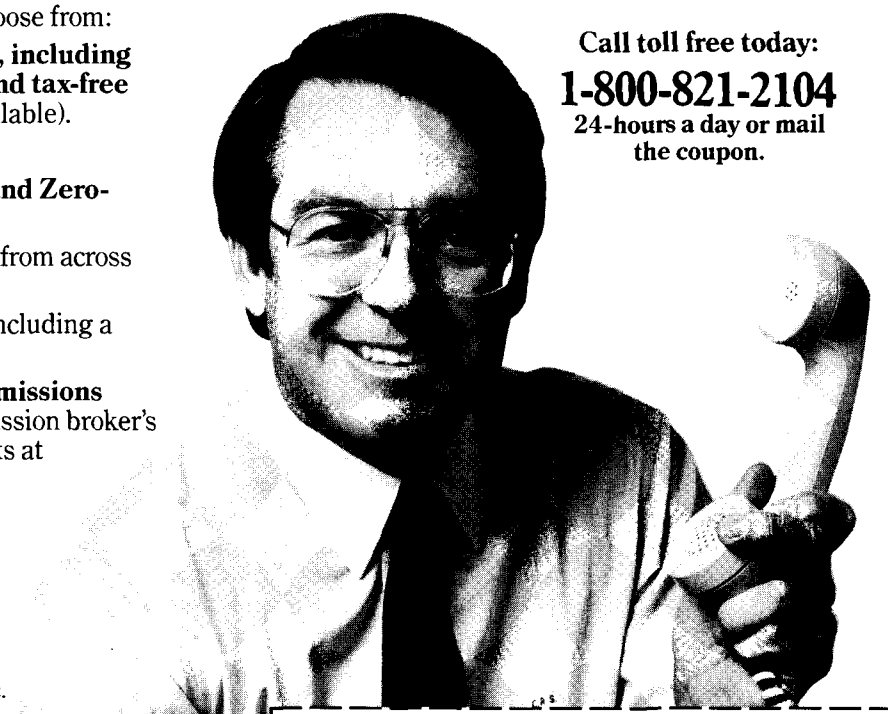

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CORRESPONDENCE

A NEW AGE PERSPECTIVE

To the editors:
Richard Blow says that New Age beliefs demand faith in things that cannot be scientifically proven ("Moronic Convergence," January 25). This is an imputation aimed more appropriately at conventional religion. A large number of New Age seekers reject any other person's rendition of spiritual ultimates, and reserve the right to believe only to the point of their own experience. Surely to think that God could only justify saving humanity from eternal damnation by making flesh an aspect of Godhood, in order to undergo a torturous death, and subsequently only confer salvation on those who believe this, is as scientifically unprovable as reincarnation.

EDWARD TABASH
Beverly Hills, California

To the editors:
Richard Blow's description of Beyond War's philosophy and method is factually accurate, but the tone of his article trivializes what is an intelligent and vigorous educational effort. He seems to conclude that a change in thinking is essentially irrelevant, and that what we are doing is thus empty. Yet political and personal behavior is based on thoughts and beliefs; thus changes in laws and policies must be preceded by changes in our perception of what is right. These changes, in turn, can only be effected by an increase in knowledge. Isn't that the very premise of THE NEW REPUBLIC? Are your efforts and activities morally and spiritually empty? Should the editors resign just because they have not achieved the change in our democracy they feel is necessary?

NICHOLAS R. RAY
Encino, California

To the editors:
TNR's bashing of the New Age was long overdue. The yuppie bashing was getting boring. But what are you? I notice the "announcement" of TNR's 1988 pocket diary—in the January 25 issue. I am thrilled that the diaries are made by the very London firm "favored by Charles Dickens and George Bernard Shaw" (that should certainly help *my* writing) and include a wine vintage chart. All this is essential beyond parody. As are the gilt edges, silken page marker, and gold embossing. The truth is revealed when one actually does something, rather than just write about it. Thank you for revealing your yuppie tastes combined with New Age organizational skills.

JAMES P. LENFESTEY
Minneapolis, Minnesota

THE POET AS PRINCE

To the editors:
In his attack on the Russian poet Andrei Voznesensky, the Lithuanian émigré poet Tomas Venclova commits the most debased kind of intellectual act, taking a whole life of courage and achievement and zeroing it out as if this were the high-minded thing to do ("The Poet As Toady," January 25). Particularly odious is his attempt to reduce to naught Voznesensky's powerful poems on the Holocaust, "The Lake" and "The Ditch," which he calls "instances of blatantly bad taste" that "trivialize the event." By way of contrast, Venclova extols Czeslaw Milosz's "discreet" poetry on the Holocaust. Apparently Venclova believes discretion is called for in dealing with the Holocaust. What an odd quality to require of poems on this subject. What can he mean? Would he think it more tasteful to maintain a "prudent silence," as Webster's defines "discreet"?

Right now Voznesensky is being attacked in the right-wing Soviet press, and harassed at his public readings by latter-day Black Hundred thugs for his writings on the Holocaust and his protests against anti-Semitism. His latest crime, in their eyes, was leading the struggle to put on the current exhibition in Moscow of paintings by Chagall, an artist long proscribed because he was a Jew and an émigré, and, as one indignant critic put it, "there are synagogues in his pictures." Voznesensky and many others wish to stay in their country for honorable reasons and are fighting the good fight there. Armchair assassins like Venclova should leave them alone, instead of seeking to annihilate them in our free press, just as writers were annihilated in the Stalin-era Soviet press.

PATRICIA BLAKE
New York, New York

To the editors:
In "The Poet As Toady" my name is mentioned along with the names of Pasternak, Chagall, Visotski, and others who are dealt with in the book by poet Andrei Voznesensky. All those personalities, as I know, valued Voznesensky's poetry and cherished his friendship. I, like a majority of the Russian reading audience, meaning those who read his poetry in its original, consider him a genius and the greatest poet of Russian language today. His poem "The Lake" is more than a protest against anti-Semitism; it is truly profound poetry. It is not all incidental that an artist like Chagall has selected this poem for his illustration out of so many things written on the topic.

MAYA PLISETSKAYA
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

To the editors:
The Voznesensky I know is indeed a gifted poet; he is also a man of courage and goodwill. I am sorry to see him called a "toady" at a time when he is working for the rehabilitation of long-suppressed writers and artists, and is being attacked in his own land by reactionaries and anti-Semites.

RICHARD WILBUR
Key West, Florida

To the editors:
The intemperate assault on the poet Andrei Voznesensky, masquerading as a review, exceeds the limits of civilized literary discourse. I am distressed by this assiduous denigration, for whatever motive, of my friend's character, this garish portrait of him as a trimmer and vulgarian, as well as by the reprehensible heading, "The Poet as Toady." The millions of Andrei's countrymen who acclaim him and the poets of the world who have embraced him in their translations know a different Voznesensky from the one slandered in TNR's pages.

STANLEY KUNITZ
New York, New York

CARLUCCI'S MARKET RATING

To the editors:
To buy the notion in the Notebook (January 18) that the "Grace Commission" has met the "Peter Principle" (i.e., the private sector's efficiency may not compare favorably with the government sector's) TNR would have us accept two assumptions: (1) that Wall Street/U.S. Big Biz as exemplified by Sears is represen-

continued on page 42

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
FEBRUARY 29, 1988

AIDS Now

The good news on AIDS is that hysteria is subsiding. Seven years into the disease, the proportion of those who contracted it in the United States through heterosexual intercourse hovers at six percent. It has been around that level since the disease first struck. If Haitians and Africans are excluded, the figure is nearer two percent. If some breakout into the general population were coming, that figure would have moved a little more. It hasn't.

The largest sample studies of heterosexual couples with one partner who is HIV-positive suggest that the chance of transference from a man to a woman in one heterosexual encounter is about one in 1,000 and transmission from a woman to a man is even rarer. A decade after the disease first emerged, the vast majority of AIDS cases still occur in two groups: gay men and intravenous drug users.

These statistics confirm the already established view that AIDS is a very difficult disease to catch. Carried by a blood-borne virus, it is transmitted through passive anal sex, intravenous needle-sharing, and any activity—such as heterosexual sex with the added factor of other venereal diseases—that facilitates the direct exchange of blood and semen. These practices are avoidable. AIDS can be too.

How should we react to these findings? Unfortunately, one tempting conclusion is that less needs to be done. An isolated minority is easier to ignore than a potential threat to the entire population. In this subtle process of neglect, it is easy to forget the flip side of the recent news: the very specificity and isolation of AIDS make it an easier disease to target and defeat. In the next phase of countering the epidemic, this needs to be kept in mind.

In any event it would be hard to do less than the Reagan administration has already been doing. The admirable Surgeon General C. Everett Koop showed up at the first international summit of health ministers in London last month to affirm a communiqué that argued that "the single most important component of national AIDS programs is information and education." Representing the Western country with by far the most extensive experience of the disease, he was the only one without a national education program. It is only now, after seven years and 30,000 deaths, that a federal leaflet will be distributed to all American homes.

When it is, it should tell Americans simply what the evidence suggests: that the danger of contracting AIDS is very limited outside certain risk-related activities, and that those activities are easily avoided. Scare tactics lead to the kind of hysteria that has persecuted AIDS sufferers from gay men to school children. The leaflet should not be weakened with vague language, as some administration officials now favor. No other Western government has so patronized its citizens as to suggest they could not cope with a clear exposition of the medical and sexual facts.

The leaflet should have two aims: to replace hysteria and fear with a clearer understanding of the disease; and to continue to argue, despite the implications of much of the evidence, for safe sex and widespread voluntary testing. There is still space for some doubt as to the rate of heterosexual transmission. The high heterosexual rate in Africa remains worrying, even though the contamination of the blood supply and extremely high levels of venereal disease can account for much of it. The U.S. heterosexual samples have been small, and the conclusions are tentative. With any level of doubt, caution is common sense.

The moral argument for safe sex also remains. Unprotected intercourse without knowledge of one's own HIV status still puts another human being at some risk, albeit small, of their lives. The case for voluntary testing is equally powerful. No one who is sexually active, even within a monogamous relationship, can base sensible conduct on ignorance. And the public health case for greater information is obvious. Breaking the taboos of HIV testing and increasing familiarity with condoms is essential if behavior is really going to change.

The most effective efforts to beat AIDS will be those that focus on specific populations. The declining rate of venereal disease among gay men shows how effective such strategies can be. In New York, meanwhile, intravenous drug users now outnumber gay men among AIDS victims. The typical AIDS victim is now black or Hispanic, poor and enmeshed in a culture of drugs and promiscuity. Mailing campaigns and public education about condoms are not likely to reach a population outside mainstream

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culture. That is why, beyond education, drastic measures are needed, such as New York's new clean-needle exchange program. Facilitating and seeming to legitimize drug abuse is an unfortunate byproduct of such a policy. But that's a reason for putting drug counseling and AIDS education, not the exchange of needles itself, at the center of the program rather than having no program at all.

But the most overlooked area of AIDS control is the campaign against other forms of venereal disease. Through the prevalence of genital ulcers, non-fatal sexually transmitted diseases can increase the virus-transference rate dramatically. The evidence this year on syphilis and chancroid, two diseases that greatly facilitate AIDS transmission, is hardly encouraging. Rates of chancroid increased by some 80 percent in 1986; rates of syphilis jumped 50 percent last year to the highest rate since 1950. Both are concentrated among the urban poor. Yet in recent years, these diseases have been a low priority for funding and treatment. That complacency, like the hysteria before it, has to stop.

NOTEBOOK

□ THOSE GOL'DARN ALLIES:

Britain and France Stay at Odds On Economic and Defense Policy

—*New York Times*, January 30

Britain, France Agree on Closer Military Ties

—*Los Angeles Times*, same day

(thanks to Henry D. Fetter, Los Angeles, California)

□ HEADACHE:

Study Disputes Aspirin's Value As a Preventive

British Study Shows No Cut in Heart Attacks

—*New York Times*, January 30

British aspirin study seems to back American findings

—*Philadelphia Inquirer*, same day

(thanks to Carl H. Manstein, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania)

□ MAYBE IT WAS DON JOHNSON:

"But Yasir Arafat's face was missing from protest placards, a sure sign of his eclipse."

—THE NEW REPUBLIC, January 18

"There is no doubt that Arafat . . . now is riding high as Palestinian hero. . . . Demonstrators in rebellious refugee camps openly flaunt his picture. . . ."

—*U.S. News and World Report*, same cover date

(thanks, sort of, to Dave Neese, the *Trentonian*, Trenton, New Jersey)

POSTCARD MOSCOW

THE COLD SHOULDER

IT'S NOW CLEAR that last year's panic about security at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow—culminating in rumors of Soviet agents roaming free through the top secret communications center—was largely unfounded. As corroborating evidence melted away on further investigation, the wilder charges against Marine Sgt. Clayton Lonetree, involving conspiracy to bring Soviet agents into the embassy, were dropped. Not that you'd guess it from the embassy in Moscow. While Russia takes advantage of Gorbachev's *glasnost*, the U.S. Embassy is reminiscent of Leonid Brezhnev's Kremlin. Spy mania, staff turnovers, and security measures that boggle the imagination have paralyzed our most important diplomatic outpost just when thousands of sources are waiting to be tapped.

I experienced all this firsthand as a guide with a government-sponsored exchange to the Soviet Union designed to show Russians the relaxed, open atmosphere unique to American society. The United States Information Agency set up an exhibit in Moscow titled "Information USA" to expose 10,000 Soviets a day to slick demonstrations on the use of computers and to give them a chance to chat freely with real Americans.

Not that we had a chance to do the same. "Any contact with Soviet citizens is discouraged," a government security officer in Washington told us. "Entrapment is a real danger. . . . You are to be on your guard at all times, and if you must meet with a Soviet citizen, always bring along a witness." By the time we got to Moscow, the warnings became harsher still. "They will use sly techniques to take you in. Even the guards outside watch every move you make. They store the information for later espionage use. Talk to no one outside work," said one of a small cadre of harried agents at the American Embassy.

Finally, after four security briefings, including three by officers who spoke no Russian and had never even been to the Soviet Union, a U.S. diplomat gave another sort of advice: "You have to take security with a grain of salt. Use your own judgment, and when you're debriefed, tell them your meetings were all on business."

Security officers at odds with the consular staff are just part of the problem at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. At first glance, it looks like a fortress under siege. With Soviet militia stationed every ten yards around the compound and a heavily wired, bulletproof, soundproof entrance that would put a ghetto liquor store to shame, the place immediately inspires paranoia. Getting in the front door can take almost 20 minutes even for a U.S. diplomat if he has not been granted prior clearance.

Add the extraordinary workload that embassy staff deal with every day and you have a system bound to fail. In October 1986, 260 Soviet workers at the embassy were withdrawn after the tit-for-tat U.S.-Soviet squabble over

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alleged Soviet spies in the United Nations. Soviets who had helped unload food at the commissary, performed some janitorial tasks, and run the motor pool were dismissed and a skeleton American staff was left to fend for itself. While private firms in the United States searched for qualified individuals to take their places, everyone in the embassy did double duty. Even now, many do extra work.

The security rules were tightened early in 1987 after Marines, including Lonetree, were charged with showing sensitive parts of the embassy to spies. At first almost all top secret contact with Washington was suspended in the embassy, curtailing useful diplomatic activity. Possibly bugged word processors were suspect. At one point, two members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee were instructed to write everything on children's Magic Slates while in the embassy.

Contact with Soviet citizens was further restricted. In Washington senators talked of incompetence, and the country's most distinguished diplomat, Arthur Hartman, was taken to task. In Moscow the first things to go were friendships. In the evening, when many of the Russian-speaking staff liked to socialize (which in the entertainment-starved world of the Soviet Union is the only means of diversion), strict rules were put in force. It was verboten for an American to visit a Soviet friend unless given the status of a "reporting officer." Not exactly helpful for breaking the ice at dinner parties.

Along with my 22 colleagues, I made the "reporting officer" level in June. This meant that our contacts were to be reported and that all were to be "for business only." Any visit to a Soviet household was to be made with a partner because, we were told, Soviets hate to entrap people when there is someone there to watch. Conversations were to be reported and names and addresses of those

THE ZEITGEIST CHECKLIST

BY CHARLES PAUL FREUND

This Week		Last Week	Weeks on Chart
1.	AWE NUTS	*	4
2.	TRICKY DICK	—	1
3.	ROTE HOGS	2	2
4.	LOCKS AND KEYS	*	2
5.	IT CAN'T HAPPEN THERE	*	5
6.	OPERATING ROOM	*	2
7.	TOMORROW'S PETTY PACE	*	8
8.	BLACK AND READ	—	1
9.	GANG OF FORTISSIMO	—	1
10.	THE CASHIERED FUTURE	—	1

Robertson. Pat Robertson's people have been a factor in three races, including their underplayed Hawaii victory. The question becomes, what are Republicans going to do about the third party in their midst? They can't debate issues. Robertson is leading a cultural crusade that is trying to swallow the party. Mainstream Republicans can neither criticize nor pander to this crowd.

Gephardt. What's Iowa about? Meeting the voters? Gephardt built a victory out of a late TV-spot blitz and calculated position flip-flops. This sounds a lot like the way you'd win with airport news conferences. Gephardt's phony outsider image, tailored to a populist environment, threatens to skew the race.

The Iowa problem. What justifies Iowa's political role is the myth of Main Street to which the culture is in thrall: old-time values live yet in the hinterland. Fatuous reporting—a storm of piglets and milking stools and steeples—revels in this fiction. But doubts were loud at caucus time. Why not a regional primary? Why not California? The move to change things, if it sticks, would represent a shift in U.S. self-image.

Panama. Now and then the nation's moral posturing is revealed as fraudulent. Iranamok was such a case. Is Noriega? Even as the U.S. indulged in anti-drug bathos, it embraced, for reasons of anti-communist macropolitics, a man it knew was pumping the country full of cocaine. Now that he's a source of instability, Noriega's been dumped. But can the administration finesse the story through this indictment?

Palestinians. While events in the occupied areas continue in a bloody stasis, U.S. Jewry has become central to the story. There is such public anguish here that Jews have been complimented by the Arab League. The potential long-term effects are serious. While the riots turned U.S. Jews dovish, Israelis appear to have hardened. The longer riots continue, the more a rift threatens.

Medical values. Medical discourse is centering around "playing God." New value-challenging treatments—spare-part babies, surrogacy, etc.—and the problem of rationing public health funds are junking former ethics codes. Previous public health revolutions (as in the 1830s) involved science vs. property rights; science won. This is science vs. basic values.

Britainization. Americans expect their children will be less well-off than they have been, according to a recent *USA Today* poll. If true, this is a sea change in the national character. Optimism about the nation's well-being has been an American characteristic from the nation's beginning. Signs of decline have been visible for some time, but such findings in a middlebrow paper are eye-opening.

Black writers. A "manifesto" on Toni Morrison's behalf, along with some James Baldwin post-mortems, have raised issues among the black literati. The Morrison manifesto complains that she hasn't won any "keystone" prizes: the NBA or the Pulitzer. But what about her Book Critics Circle award? The whole thing may be Pulitzer mau-mauing.

China trips. Pavarotti's trip to China is at least the third visit by a Western artist to be turned into a popular work (Stern's and Miller's were the others). In its way, this genre is as political as the Red Guard attack on Mozart. It suggests a desire to have our cultural values endorsed by a non-Western audience, especially a communized one. Who are the cultural supplicants here?

ATMs. Cash machine use is far below expectations; people would rather line up inside. Banks now charge for ATM use, with some making friendly personnel a major ad theme. They're missing the point. Americans don't believe in friendly banks. It's fear that's motivating them—fear of doing cash transactions on the street and fear of ATM screwups. A major social fact, anxiety is usually omitted from futurists' calculations.

*Item resurfaces in the Zeitgeist after at least one week's absence.

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visited were to be handed over. In an embassy where typewriter ribbons disappear, bugs are in every piece of plaster, and microwaves are used for monitoring, this in effect meant giving Soviet citizens' addresses to the KGB.

Security rules were changed one more time after this, and the numerous hysterical briefings showed no sign of petering out. The atmosphere didn't lend itself to complaints. Still, I was assured that low-profile visits to some Soviet citizens would be acceptable as long as I wrote any articles after I had returned home. In Washington I had also been told by my employers at the United States Information Agency that I could collect interviews, but could not publish anything until I left the country. It would reflect badly on our mission.

Bravely I set out. A Moscow correspondent gave me the telephone number of Roy Medvedev, a dissident historian who is probably the finest scholar on the Stalinist period in the world today. If anyone could see the underlying dangers in *perestroika*, I reasoned, it would be Medvedev. I visited him—on my own, against the rules—in his Moscow apartment for an hour and gave him tickets to the U.S. exhibit. A week later, I was invited to the home of Bulat Okudzhava, a very well-known folk singer on the order of Pete Seeger. During a ten-minute interview, I embarrassedly told him U.S. rules did not allow me to meet with him. I needed a partner, and would have to report the encounter. I invited him to visit the exhibit and left.

When word of these visits reached the embassy, I was called into a refrigerator-like, soundproof chamber for interrogation. After a painfully long record of each meeting was taken down and I signed yet another new statement of the rules for contact, I was told to wait. During the two weeks that the various parts of the embassy made their recommendations on my case, I continued to speak with the Muscovites that packed our exhibit every day. Though the displays told them of the freedom of association in the United States, I began to sound less convincing.

Finally I was called into the embassy for another meeting, where a retiring officer said an official letter of reprimand had been placed in my personnel file. Several weeks later a security officer brusquely informed me he had recommended I be expelled from the country.

DO ALL of these measures increase contact with the Soviet Union, the professed aim of my trip and President Reagan's policies? Do they protect our diplomats from the wiles of Soviet agents and their operatives? The result at our mission is no communication and poor information gathering. Many of the approximately 250 staff members hide information from security or at least do not volunteer anything unless they are questioned. No one ever expressed any curiosity about Medvedev's ideas; in fact, the security officers who questioned me had never heard of him.

I do not mean to say that care should not be exercised. Soviet militia are everywhere, and the new politics of Mikhail Gorbachev are only slowly changing the xenophobic way the Soviets deal with foreigners. Yet if we tie our own hands with the kind of bureaucracy and paranoia that have long stifled Soviet intelligence and diplomacy, we are in effect blowing our chance to squeeze vital information out of a *glasnost*-loosened regime.

In any case, the U.S. Embassy has by far the strictest reporting rules of any foreign mission. Though most embassies ask for information if something questionable occurs, ours is the only one that requires the names of those we visit. Though West German and French embassies instruct their workers on the danger of sex with Soviets, no other mission orders its consular staff to go out in pairs. A French Embassy employee told me that the Western Europeans, who are just as threatened by Soviet espionage as Americans, strike a balance between encouraging informative conversations with Soviet citizens and enforcing flexible rules. Only the Americans have reacted to *glasnost* with a bunker mentality that makes successful diplomacy virtually impossible.

CHARLES STROUSE

Charles Strouse is a writer in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Why *Roe* v. *Wade* is safe.

KENNEDY JUSTICE

I AM WILLING to bet that Justice Anthony Kennedy, a Catholic and a conservative, will not vote to overturn the Supreme Court's abortion decision. The reason is that Kennedy is also a former Sacramento lobbyist and a Republican. He knows that overturning *Roe* v. *Wade* would tear apart state legislatures and the Republican Party.

If *Roe* v. *Wade* were overturned, each state legislature would have to decide its state's abortion policy. Even in the pre-*Roe* era, there were intense legislative battles over abortion in states such as New York. Today the battles would be even more intense. Both the anti-abortion forces—which were galvanized by the *Roe* decision—and the pro-choice women's movement are far stronger than they were two decades ago. We would be treated to gory pictures of aborted fetuses and horror stories of botched backroom abortions. (Did you see *Dirty Dancing*?) There would be demonstrations, sit-ins, and perhaps even violence.

State legislators are, by and large, a genial lot—far more at home swapping votes in local taverns than participating in a holy war. Abortion legislation would be about as popular with state legislators as effective conflict-of-interest laws. Will Anthony Kennedy do in his old friends in Sacramento and their counterparts throughout the nation? For that matter, will Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, herself a former state legislator, do in her old colleagues? I doubt it.

Overturning *Roe* v. *Wade* also would have a devastating impact on the Republican Party. Abortion is not a party

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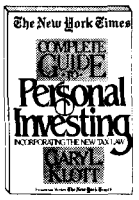

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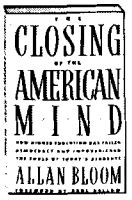

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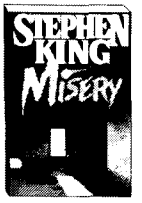

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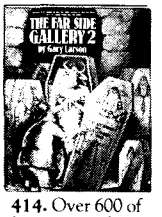

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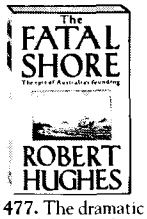

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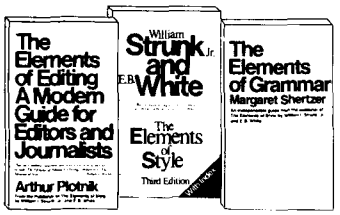

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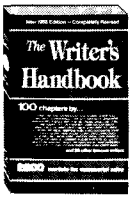

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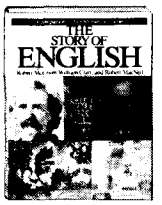

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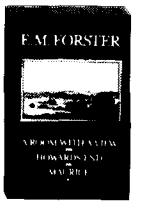

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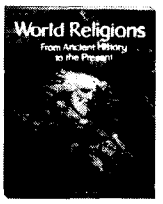

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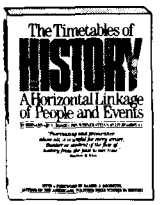

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issue, but it is more divisive for Republicans than for Democrats. Republicans are trying to hold together an uneasy coalition of anti-government libertarians and social conservatives. This coalition might not survive the fight over abortion. Many Republicans, particularly younger voters attracted to the party by its promise of greater economic freedom and opportunity, will not stomach a government-imposed ban on abortion.

Perhaps Kennedy and O'Connor (who as the first woman justice faces additional pressures in the abortion debate) will not be swayed by concerns about the Republican Party—the party that placed them on the Court and that is the repository of conservative values. But again I doubt it. I believe they will find a rationale, consistent with their judicial philosophies, to avoid overturning *Roe* v. *Wade*. The doctrine of stare decisis, based on a conservative respect for precedent and settled expectations, will do nicely.

BAKER V. CARR

Baker V. Carr is a pseudonym for a Washington lawyer.

CAMPAIGN '88

MIDEAST MUSH

CHARACTERISTICALLY, Bruce Babbitt is the most forthright of the 1988 candidates on the issue of Israeli riot-control tactics on the West Bank and Gaza. Israel is our friend and ally, he told the *Des Moines Register*, but "we do no honor to that alliance by standing silent when the Israeli government permits the use of live ammunition against teenagers throwing rocks" and "when we fail to protest the breaking of bones and the administration of beatings as a deliberate method of civil control." Except for Gary Hart, who pronounced Israel's actions as "wrong," all the other candidates—even Jesse Jackson—responded to a *Register* survey on the subject with . . . mush.

Michael Dukakis, for example, said that Palestinian unrest was the tragic result of failure to follow up on the Camp David peace process, that Israel had a "legitimate right to restore order," that "in several instances military personnel have used excessive force," but that now the Israeli government "acknowledges that some of its policies were inappropriate." Richard Gephardt totally avoided the question of Israeli conduct and said, "I believe the responsibility for the current situation rests on many shoulders," chiefly those of Arab governments, the PLO, and the Reagan administration. Albert Gore declined to participate in the *Register* survey but said in a New Hampshire TV debate that "the failure of the current administration [to advance the peace process] is one of the reasons why the situation in the Middle East has gotten to this stage." Paul Simon said that Israel "faces a tough situation," called for "restraint . . . by all parties," and also blamed the Reagan administration.

Jackson said, "I regret the use of excessive force and the tragic loss of life. The situation calls for a more humane and enlightened response. It is past the time to end the violence and begin the dialogue."

On the Republican side, Bob Dole came the closest to matching Babbitt's frankness, at least initially. On January 7 he told a business group in Manchester, New Hampshire, that "when you start using live ammunition on young people and mothers, you've got a problem, more than a p.r. problem, and we don't like it." By the time of the *Register* survey, though, he was circumlocuting along with everyone else: "I know the Israelis are working hard to find a way to deal with this very difficult situation." George Bush, similarly, recognized Israel's right to restore order, expressed sadness at the loss of life, noted that the administration had urged use of non-lethal crowd-control methods, and concluded that "there will not be lasting peace until the Palestinian question has been solved."

Pat Robertson referred to Israel's "brutal force" and said that it "is raising a generation of Palestinians who know nothing but violence," but he added that it is hard for Americans to judge Israel because "we don't understand the pressures of having to police an enemy within your own border." Jack Kemp wouldn't judge at all. In keeping with his unswerving support of Israel on other issues, he said only that "the Israelis need to restore law and order in the face of violent demonstrations."

All this apparent cravenness is in sharp contrast to the "horror and outrage" expressed (albeit privately) by a dozen Jewish members of Congress to Israeli ambassador Moshe Arad on January 25. One congressman said Arad was told that beating protesters was "an abhorrent policy, not befitting a nation that holds itself to Israel's ideals." Arad reportedly responded that Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin's announcement of Israeli intentions to use "force, might, and beatings" had been "misinterpreted" and was not policy, which some of the congressmen didn't buy. An Israeli participant said he had never before seen such a protest over Israeli actions by American legislators.

In Israel itself, the press has gone well beyond the posture of America's would-be presidents. The *Jerusalem Post*, for one, has been especially critical of Rabin's attempt to blame PLO "terrorists" for the Gaza unrest. "It is only ignorance and guile that would seek to equate the rebellion of an occupied or repressed population with limited reach of a terrorist organization," the *Post* said on January 21. None of the candidates has gone as far as this very magazine—certainly consistent and more in its support for Israel—which accused Rabin of "official thuggery" and said, "Rabin has sanctioned brutalities that should burden the conscience of Israel."

Why can't the presidential candidates act more like moral leaders? Well, in the Dukakis campaign, they think their man is actually doing so. "This is a fairly tough statement," said one of the candidate's foreign policy advisers. A more direct answer came from one of Bush's major Jewish backers, who said the candidates "are concerned about support-

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ers of Israel. If they criticize, who are they going to gain with? All they can do is get into trouble." The director of a Jewish political action committee said, "Look, many of the candidates are broke and they are going to be looking for money. Why should they alienate a major source of support, especially when they are heading into Florida, Illinois, New York, and Pennsylvania?"

Although each candidate has important Jewish supporters, according to political activists, so-called "institutional Jewish money" or "pro-Israel money"—which once seemed headed in large amounts for Senator Joseph Biden—is remaining uncommitted to any candidate. Walter Mondale received up to half of his 1984 campaign money from such sources, or $9 million. Such contributions are distinct from New York-Hollywood "liberal money which happens to be Jewish," which formerly was headed toward Hart and now is going to Dukakis and Simon. "Except for Jesse Jackson, all the Democrats in the race are friends," said one pro-Israel PAC director. "If I have six friends," he said,"why should I piss off five by making an early choice?"

AMONG DEMOCRATS, indeed, all the candidates but Jackson have strong pro-Israel records. Jackson, who has toned down his language from the Louis Farrakhan-"Hymietown" nadir of 1984, is still deeply distrusted by Jews. Babbitt has no voting record on aid and other issues but has strong ties to the Arizona Jewish community. Dukakis has similar connections in Massachusetts, and his wife, Kitty, is Jewish. Simon says in his book, *The Once and Future Democrats*, that the United States "should be willing to talk to the PLO," though not formally negotiate with it unless it accepts Israel's existence. Simon, Gephardt, Hart, and Gore, as members of Congress, all have sturdy pro-Israel voting records, though none is regarded as a leader in fighting Israel's battles, as Kemp is among the Republicans. Kemp has promised to make Jeane Kirkpatrick secretary of state, so she can "clean the Arabists out of the State Department."

Among other Republicans, Robertson has taken similarly strong pro-Israel positions—"even when the the weather was bad," one activist said, "as during the Lebanon war." He favors Israel's keeping the West Bank. Many Jews, though, are put off by Robertson's evangelical Christianity, fearing they would be rendered second-class citizens if he were elected president. Dole had a pro-Israel voting record until he became Senate majority leader and began shepherding Reagan administration bills to provide arms for Saudi Arabia and Jordan, but this role is not held against him by pro-Israel lobbyists. In fact, he is given credit for serving as an intermediary between the administration and such Israel lobby stalwarts as Howard Metzenbaum and Rudy Boschwitz. Dole stole Kemp's position as chief sponsor of legislation to close down the PLO's offices in Washington and New York, and he has advocated an informal arrangement to make Israel a partner in the defense of NATO's southern flank. Dole's advisers, especially campaign manager Bill Brock, are regarded as sympathetic to Israel's interests.

Bush, meanwhile, has a "Jewish problem" that may be more a matter of personal chemistry than policy. "It's not any WASPish anti-Semitism on his part," one activist said, "but Semitic anti-WASPism on our part." Even though Bush is No. 2 in probably the most pro-Israel administration ever, and though he personally arranged for the rescue of 800 Ethiopian Jews facing starvation in 1985, he has complicated his problems with unfortunate utterances. During the 1984 vice presidential debate, he referred to the Arab-Israel dispute as "the Palestine question," and during the 1985 TWA hostage-taking, he said that Israel should release "people being held against international law," as though its Lebanese Shiite prisoners were hostages too.

Bush also has attempted to escape from Iranamok by blaming Israel for the arms-for-hostages deal. Even in his desperate attempt to pass the buck, however, he usually is comically careful (in the infamous Dan Rather interview, for example) to place the blame on an unnamed "third country." Israel *is* partly to blame for the arms-for-hostages mess, although that hardly means that Bush is blameless. Some members of the Jewish community feel he is scapegoating.

There are defensible reasons, besides narrow politics, for a candidate to temper his criticism of Israel's treatment of protesters. As a Gephardt adviser put it, "There is no point in picking quarrels right now when, if you get elected, you're going to try to make things happen. The question to judge the candidates by is not 'Were you too hard or soft on Israel?' but 'What are you going to do about the problem?' To accuse them of being soft is to apply a reverse litmus test from the one that's usually applied. What a president has to do is negotiate, and the beginning point for that is to establish that you have Israel's security uppermost in your mind." Of course this neither truly explains nor justifies Gephardt's refusal to criticize Israeli behavior at all.

When the candidates were asked by the *Des Moines Register* what they planned to do about the West Bank, the answers came up a mélange of references to Camp David and the need for American presidential involvement, Palestinian autonomy without an independent state in the West Bank, and direct talks between the parties with no American-imposed solutions. Only Robertson put the matter straightforwardly, in terms that would warm the heart of Ariel Sharon: "There is an autonomous homeland already for Palestine, and it is called Jordan. If Jordan would just establish a democracy, there would be a Palestinian state." He did not say how he proposed to make Jordan a democracy.

To Democratic complaints that the Reagan administration is to blame for the Gaza mess because it did not pursue a peace process, administration officials counter that Democrats (and Jack Kemp) are to blame for blocking arms sales to Jordan that might have helped draw King Hussein into direct negotiations. Talk about Camp David is "a good, cheap campaign device," said a Reagan aide. The administration wants to use the current crisis atmosphere as leverage for a quick autonomy arrangement and the beginning of talks on a permanent settlement that would get serious

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after the American and Israeli elections this November.

If there is ever to be peace in the Middle East, it will probably take a tough, smart U.S. administration to help bring it to pass—tough enough to get Israel to give up land for peace, smart enough to get the Arabs to give peace for less land than they want. It would be nice if the next president also were as forthright and moral as Bruce Babbitt in speaking out about Israeli misdeeds, but brains and courage in peace diplomacy are far more important. Do any of the candidates fit the bill? Not so's you can tell from what they say.

MORTON M. KONDRACKE

Spare us Super Bowl fever.

THE GREAT PIG OUT

GIVING GOVERNMENT WORKERS a paid day off to mark the life of Martin Luther King Jr. was a wrenching experience for President Reagan. But he hadn't a qualm about giving the same employees paid leave of absence to honor the black quarterback of the Washington Redskins. He would have done the same for a white man. No affirmative action here, but this was football, serious stuff, not the keening of special interest groups.

Nevertheless, the blackness of the quarterback was being made much of in media as varied as the *Wall Street Journal* and the "MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour." The first black quarterback to win the Super Bowl! A moment in the history of civil rights as precious as John Lewis leading the marchers across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, in 1965.

For the lizard-skinned, Lacoste-type white men who put Man Tan on their faces and run the National Football League, Doug Williams's performance ought to prove that blacks can cut the mustard even in the glamour jock jobs. Every other white male, no matter how disposed to belittle "them," will swear to you the one thing "they" can do is play ball. Even Jimmy the Greek knew they were good at athletics; he just thought they were specially bred for the work. The fact that blacks can play all the positions on a football team comes as something less than a surprise.

We don't need another black hero with a ball in his hands. Nevertheless, Williams's face is already decorating the backs of thousands of cartons of Wheaties, since he is, in the words of David Clarke, chairman of D.C.'s City Council, "the best role model in the area."

No insult intended toward Doug Williams personally, but he could hardly make a worse role model. Let's get some role models into the black teenage pantheon who don't run, jump, dance, or sing. Sports and entertainment, that's how a black man got somewhere way back when Jack Johnson beat a white man for the boxing championship and, one presumes, became a role model for an infinite number of young black pugilists. So many followed in his footsteps that boxing has become a black occupation, which would be fine if only blacks were having the same impact on an occupation like molecular biology. But here it is February, black history month again, and still nobody knows who Ida B. Wells was or what Marcus Garvey did.

Black is the dominant skin color of the American gladiator, and as in the days of the Roman republic, much is made of the helmeted men who, armor-clad, battle to victory in the echoing arena. No political demonstration in the last 15 years, be it for abortion, for peace, for any cause, turned out a crowd the size of the one that came to watch the Redskin's victory parade when they returned to their home city after winning the Super Bowl in San Diego. The pope didn't draw crowds like that on his first tour, when he was still a novelty and people had yet to realize what a pain in the tush he would be. More people watched the Redskins' triumphal arrival at City Hall, where the president waited for them, than took part in the combined Republican and Democratic Iowa caucuses.

In times past, political events such as the Labor Day rallies in Detroit's Cadillac Square and Chicago's torchlight parade finale before election day would draw hundreds of thousands. The athletes and the entertainers would be introduced to the crowds as pleasing novelties. Now it's the other way around. Now a politician finds a comely star to wiggle her fanny to attract a crowd so he's got somebody to make a speech to.

A throng of 600,000 people cheered as Williams led his Redskins through the streets of Washington. Half of Washington's children skipped school, but—*tant pis!*—the District of Columbia public school system is so lousy a child is as likely to be contaminated with knowledge outside the classroom as in it.

The parade illustrates the collusion between professional sports and politics. These games are like the bread and circuses that kept the population goofy and grateful in old Rome. For untold millions, sports has replaced the conflict of ideas, parties, and personalities that once composed the civic and political life of our citizens.

At least in the days of the Roman republic, the politicians used to pay for the bread and circuses. Under the American system, the people themselves pay. In city after city, sports businessmen are able to extort hundreds of millions of dollars for the glorious, ugly, domed stadia that are becoming part of the urban landscape. You may have to pick your way into the stadium stepping over the prone bodies of the homeless, but there is seldom much opposition to providing homes for sports stars to play games in. The owner of the Washington team, a pugnaciously unpleasant man named Jack Kent Cooke, has given the city of Washington his ultimatum: build me my domed stadium and my luxury boxes and my other perks or I move out.

There will be politicians aplenty to guide Cooke's hand to the public strongbox. After all, the Redskins are "America's team," or so said Senator John Warner, the Republican from Virginia who used to be Elizabeth Taylor's husband but is now known mostly as a leading candidate for low IQ man in the Senate.

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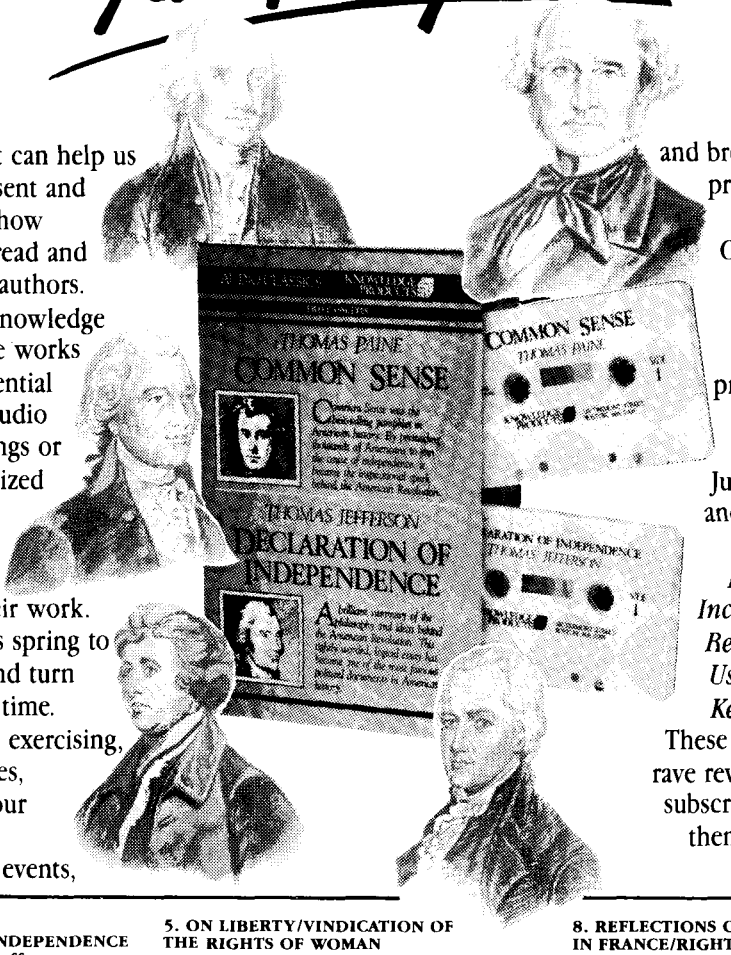

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Dressed in his Sunday-go-to-meeting toga, he was on hand with the other politicians to enjoy the circus. Let them don their laurel wreaths and strew flowers at the feet of a black Nobel Prize winner in chemistry.

In any case, Hail to the Redskins, as the title of their song goes, and hail to their fans, loutish pols, coarse inebriates in plaid Bermuda shorts and porkpie hats with plastic pig noses on their faces. On the faintly hopeful side, the Nielsen ratings gave this year's piganalia, the game itself, the lowest rating in 14 years. But the Super Bowl's popularity surely will return when people recollect that the alternative to enduring these vulgarities might be voting.

NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

All the signs point to a Democratic victory in November.

A DONKEY'S YEAR

BY FRED BARNES

Des Moines, Iowa

When Democratic Congressman Les Aspin encountered a Republican political consultant recently, he readily conceded that the GOP presidential candidates look "better than ours." His opinion is widely shared by Democrats. According to an ABC News/*Washington Post* poll in late January, a solid third (34 percent) of Democratic voters think a Republican will capture the White House again in 1988. Only 55 percent are satisfied with the seven candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination. Richard Gephardt, the closest thing to a Democratic frontrunner after finishing first in the Iowa caucuses on February 8, regularly confronts this defeatism in his stump speeches. He insists a Democrat will win this year, but he insists too much. You get the impression he doesn't really believe it.

He should believe it. Depending on who gets the nomination, Democrats have a better than 50-50 chance of winning the White House. I'd bet on Gephardt or Michael Dukakis or Albert Gore as probable winners over either of the Republican leaders, George Bush or Bob Dole. Republican strategists tend to agree. Representative Vin Weber of Minnesota argues that Republicans have thrown away their best issue, defense and national security, in favor of détente with the Soviet Union, and also face a strong national desire for change. Edward J. Rollins, who managed President Reagan's re-election campaign in 1984 and now advises Jack Kemp, says he "begins with the premise that someone is going to emerge as a very viable Democratic candidate." Stuart Rothenberg of the conservative Free Congress Foundation says, "A Democratic candidate who defines the issues on which the election turns could win 80 percent of the states."

In presidential elections, there are normally three overriding issues: the economy, national security, and leadership. In losing three of the last four elections by landslides—to Richard Nixon in 1972 and Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 1984—Democrats did so poorly on the economy and national security that leadership hardly mattered. But they came up short on leadership too. Not so in 1988. The right Democratic nominee could easily come out ahead on two of three, and the third issue (national security) may not matter. Believe me, this isn't farfetched. Just take a look.

Economy. I think Reaganomics has been remarkably successful, despite the bulging budget and trade deficits. On Election Day in 1980 the inflation rate was 12 percent. Last year it was 3.3 percent. Unemployment has dipped from seven percent in 1980 to less than six percent now. The economy has grown steadily for 62 consecutive months in what President Reagan is fond of calling "the longest peacetime expansion" in modern times. Few economists are predicting a recession in 1988. Oh, yes, the stock market has reached record highs under Republican rule. And so on. But what's amazing, to me at any rate, is that the public doesn't share my assessment. Voters are queasy about the economy, concerned, even alarmed.

William Greider, who predicts a Democratic win this fall in the February 11 *Rolling Stone*, says the economy is "weak and getting weaker." Voters agree with him. In the ABC/*Post* survey in January, the public disapproved of Reagan's handling of the economy, 52 percent to 46 percent. Asked which way they think the economy is going, 45 percent said it is getting worse and 18 percent said getting better (37 percent said it is staying the same). This cannot be encouraging to Republicans. Nor is the political impact of the October 19 stock market crash. Voters have not concluded, as I have, that the economy's ability to absorb the crash proves how strong it really is. Instead, the ABC News/*Money* magazine Consumer Comfort Index has dropped through the floor since the crash, reaching in January the low point (minus 19, from a high of plus 10) in its two-year history.

But does the unease help the Democrats, who haven't been well regarded on economic issues by the public? The answer is yes. The ABC/*Post* poll found that by 48 percent to 44 percent Americans think a Democratic president could handle the economy better. By 44 percent to 42 percent, they believe a Democrat would deal more effectively with

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the deficit. By 54 percent to 38 percent, they think a Democrat would create more jobs. These poll numbers on Democrats and the economy represent a dramatic reversal.

The trick for Democrats is nominating a candidate who can capitalize. Anyone who can be tagged credibly as a big-spending liberal can't. That means Paul Simon, who is probably out of the picture anyway after failing to win the Iowa caucuses, and Jesse Jackson. Nor can Bruce Babbitt, who thinks the public is eager for someone who honestly admits he'll raise taxes a lot. He's wrong. Even Iowa liberals rejected him and his message. A big tax hike remains very unpopular. But Dukakis, Gephardt, and Gore have positioned themselves well to avoid the tax-and-spend label that Republicans would try to pin on them in the fall. Dukakis says he'd crack down on tax cheaters first, and he invokes GOP buzzwords such as "economic growth" and "investment in technology." Gephardt says tax reform, and thus tax rates, shouldn't be tinkered with. He is champion of the one popular tax, increased tariffs on imports. It drew 70 percent support in a Gallup Poll for the Times Mirror Corporation in January. Gore says he'd go after "wasteful" and "unnecessary" spending before considering new taxes.

National security. In every poll I've seen, more voters believe that Republicans are better at providing a strong defense (56 percent to 25 percent in a Marttila and Kiley survey last October) and at dealing with the Soviets (44 percent to 34 percent). This has been a powerful Republican issue. Americans like a president who is assertive in standing up for American interests, even if they don't agree with the specifics of his policies. The bad news for Democrats is that their seven presidential candidates sound unassertive and isolationist. The good news is that this probably won't mean much in the general election.

Reagan has removed the threat that makes the national security issue work for Republicans—the Soviet threat. He has held three summits with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and has plans for another this spring in Moscow. He has signed an arms control treaty. And he says over and over that Gorbachev and his ruling clique in the Kremlin are a new and different breed, and aren't interested in dominating the world. After the December summit, White House aides tried to get Reagan to tone down his dovish comments. They primed him to talk tough in an interview with Hugh Sidey of *Time*. But he still said nice things about the Soviet leader.

Republicans can comfort themselves with the notion that they've stolen the peace issue from the Democrats. Big deal. That issue didn't help George McGovern, Jimmy Carter, or Walter Mondale. But all three were hurt by the defense and national security issue. In 1988 Republicans will have difficulty transforming Gorbachev into a bogeyman. A January poll by Market Opinion Research showed that 72 percent of Americans view him favorably. Some 73 percent said Gorbachev is at least "somewhat" trustworthy, and 55 percent said he is sincere about wanting to reduce nuclear arsenals. Where's the threat? The Democratic presidential candidate only has to toss Reagan's words back at his Republican opponent.

Leadership. Perhaps the silliest notion of the campaign is the "stature gap," the idea that the Republican candidates are a magnitude or two higher in stature as leaders than the Democrats. True, Bush and Dole have more experience in national government than any of the Democrats, and won easily in most head-to-head pairings with Democratic candidates before the primaries began. This only proves they are better known. By Super Tuesday on March 8, the Democratic field will have narrowed and one or two candidates will stand out. They'll be instantly well known, and they'll instantly rise to the Bush-Dole status level. Representative Weber, for one, believes that Bush and Dole will trail one or two Democratic candidates in head-to-head polls by March 1. I wouldn't be surprised at that. Even now Teddy Kennedy, supposedly discredited as a national figure, leads Bush 48 percent to 47 percent in the ABC/*Post* poll. And that was before Bush's Iowa embarrassment.

Frank Lavin, the deputy White House political director, has a sophisticated argument in favor of the stature gap. He says stature comes from one of three things: holding national office, having run for national office before, or somehow becoming a "figure of national stature" by, say, military distinction or identification with a major issue. "The fact is that voters prefer a candidate who has been market-tested," says Lavin. Only one president in the last 40 years, Carter, didn't meet these criteria. Among the current Democratic candidates, only Jesse Jackson and Gary Hart qualify, and neither is electable. Therefore, Republicans win again. Well, this is a nice theory, but it doesn't hold up. Lavin says two other party nominees from 1944 to 1984, besides Carter, failed the stature test, Adlai Stevenson in 1952 and Barry Goldwater in 1964. But they lost for reasons other than stature. Carter was the only non-stature candidate who had a real shot at winning, and he won. So can Gephardt, Dukakis, or Gore.

THERE'S ANOTHER THEORY that points to a GOP victory, the "Republican electoral lock." It was devised by Horace Busby, a Washington consultant and former aide to Lyndon Johnson. The idea is that Republicans have an advantage because the shift in population to the Sunbelt has put a majority of the electoral votes in fairly conservative states. Busby notes that 39 states have voted Republican in a majority of the last nine elections. He says he hasn't seen any drift toward voting for a Democratic presidential candidate in these states in 1988. So far, so good. Republicans have an advantage in the Electoral College. But they hardly have a lock. And a Democratic victory doesn't depend on states drifting toward the Democrats but on the Democratic candidates moving in their direction. This is exactly what Dukakis, Gephardt, and Gore are doing, at least on many domestic issues.

Rothenberg of the Free Congress Foundation argues in the March/April issue of *Public Opinion* that the GOP lock is a myth. He says Republicans won in 1968, 1972, and 1980 because Democrats "committed hari-kari" in choosing their nominee. In 1956, 1972, and 1984, Republican incumbents won. And when there were open races, in 1952, 1960,

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and 1976, Republicans only won when a wildly popular war hero, Dwight Eisenhower, headed the ticket. GOP victories had nothing to do with a "lock," Rothenberg says. In any case, "The 1988 environment will be very different from, well, pick any year."

The key to breaking the "lock" is the South, where Democrats were wiped out in 1980 and 1984. Rollins says Democrats can win in Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Georgia, and possibly Louisiana. Better still for Democrats, the Pacific region "is absolutely up for grabs without a Californian on the ticket." Remember, a Californian (Nixon or Reagan) has been on the ticket in every GOP victory since 1952. This year there won't be one. Governor George Deukmejian has taken himself out of vice presidential consideration because the Democratic lieutenant governor would take power whenever he was out of state campaigning. And Republican Senator Pete Wilson is seeking reelection, so he can't be anybody's running mate. If a Democrat carries California, Oregon, Washington, New Mexico, a few Southern states, and the Northern industrial belt, he's elected.

There are three other reasons why Democrats are odds-on in 1988. First, the new issues in the race are theirs—education, child-care, the environment. If Education Secretary Bill Bennett were the Republican candidate, education might be a GOP issue. Without him, the issue becomes who's willing to talk more about education and spend more on it. Sure, Bush says he wants to be known as "the education president." But who takes that seriously? Democrats are simply more comfortable with the issue. And on child-care and the environment, Republicans are playing catch-up. Republicans talk about these only when the issues they prefer, low taxes and anti-communism, aren't cutting, which they aren't. In January Republican national chairman Frank Fahrenkopf issued "the Republican pledge." It tried to put a GOP stamp on the education, child-care, and environment issues. What the pledge showed is that Democrats now control the campaign agenda.

Republicans are victims of success. They've achieved the things that brought the Reagan coalition together in the first place, the desire for tax cuts and a stronger military. "When you address the problems that originally put you in office, you destroy the coalition that put you there," says Lavin. Rollins points out that Republicans haven't done much for the Democratic voting groups that joined the coalition—urban Catholics, white Southerners, labor, younger voters.

Second, there's the squabble factor. The party with internecine fighting usually loses. Normally this is the Democrats. Now not only are Dole and Bush picking at each other like sibling rivals, but the GOP has Pat Robertson to contend with. Robertson doesn't have enough support to win the nomination, but he has enough to cause trouble. After topping Bush in Iowa, he's now likely to stay in the race for the duration. Should he emerge as the balance of power at the convention, that would pull the party all the more to the right. "When the nominating process gets skewed, that party gets screwed," says Democratic consultant Mark Siegel. "If there's a prime-time platform fight on creationism on the Tuesday of the convention, the Republicans will forfeit the political center." And lose the election.

Third, and most important, is the yearning for change. This isn't as hard to quantify as you might think. A Gallup Poll in January asked voters if they wanted a Democratic or a Republican president in 1988. A Democrat was preferred by 42 percent to 33 percent. Last September an ABC/*Post* survey found that by 55 percent to 41 percent the public wants a president who'll set the country in a new direction, not one who'll pursue Reagan's direction. Most encouraging of all is the sentiment among swing Democrats who voted for Reagan in 1984. The January ABC/*Post* poll found that they would vote for a generic Democrat by 59 percent to 30 percent.

My guess is that voters don't want much ideological change. The change they want is stylistic and generational. And they can get it by voting for the party they naturally identify with. "Reagan has weakened but failed to break the Democrats' grass-roots hold on American politics," says Jeff Alderman, ABC's polling analyst. Nearly every political survey shows that the Democratic advantage in party identification is undiminished. Gallup had it at 42 percent Democratic and 27 percent Republican in January 1981. Six years later it was 39 percent to 32 percent. In Roper polls, it went from 45 percent/25 percent in 1981 to 45 percent/27 percent in 1987. In the ABC/*Post* survey, the change was from 36 percent/28 percent in 1981 to 39 percent/27 percent in 1987. If there's a political realignment hidden in those numbers, I don't see it.

A Republican simply won't attract as many Democratic crossover voters in 1988. "A lot of Democrats will stay in their party," say Rollins, "and they are going to give Democrats a chance. There's not the animosity [to Democrats] there was in 1980. There's not the affection for Reagan or the dismay with Mondale of 1984." This time Democrats have a clear path to the White House. The election is theirs to lose.

Today's twerp is tomorrow's giant.

FDR The Dwarf?

By David Seideman

ONCE AGAIN Democrats are preparing to kill their young. Since the fall edgy Democratic leaders have held three fruitless strategy sessions on Capitol Hill in the hope of sharpening the party's message and luring new candidates into the race. The meetings included Florida Senator Bob Graham, former party chairman Robert

David Seideman is a reporter-researcher for *Time*.

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Strauss, former Virginia Governor Chuck Robb, North Carolina Senator Terry Sanford, California's Alan Cranston, and several other senators. Elsewhere, one leader groused that Democrats were running their "third team" against the Republicans' "first team." Senator Ernest Hollings lamented the absence of anyone with the "stature of Dole and Bush." George McGovern, no less, emerged from deep oblivion to declare his readiness to save the day.

There is nothing new in this pre-primary loss of faith in the candidates. During three of this century's watershed elections, party pros and pundits grossly underestimated the very candidates Democrats worship today as idols. At the depths of the Depression in 1932, Democratic Party leaders found both Franklin Roosevelt and Herbert Hoover wanting in the leadership department. At first blush Roosevelt's campaign platitudes about fiscal austerity and balanced budgets suggested a straddler. Too eager to please and too cautious to take political risks, Roosevelt was, Walter Lippmann observed, a "pleasant man who, without any qualifications for the office, would very much like to be president." Dismissing Roosevelt as "an untried jockey on a lame horse," THE NEW REPUBLIC's managing editor, Bruce Bliven, endorsed Socialist Norman Thomas. Yet, as governor of New York, Roosevelt had expanded the state's public works program, achieved the first comprehensive system of employment insurance, and implemented distribution of food to the hungry. As the only leader in either party to offer progressive proposals, he saluted the "forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid" and delivered at least one major address foreshadowing the New Deal.

Roosevelt's political genius of appearing most things to most people created the false impression, even among Democrats, that he was a dilettante. Boss Frank Hauge of Jersey City despaired that he had "no chance of winning in November." The wily House Speaker, John Nance Garner, argued for heavier federal spending too, but reckoned he could head Roosevelt off at the pass by warning Democrats that if he "goes too far with some of these wild-eyed ideas we are going to have the shit kicked out of us." At the convention Garner entered the race as Texas's favorite son against a throng of other compromise candidates, including—with Dean Acheson's support—Maryland's conservative governor, Albert Ritchie. In the end, the voters embraced Roosevelt's warm persona and upbeat homilies as the safest palliative to America's woes. An oft-quoted proverb at the time held that you dance to the tune, not the words. Technocrats take note.

IN 1948 Harry Truman's contemporaries considered him laughably unfit to inherit Roosevelt's legacy. His homely spectacles, high-pitched voice, and plain demeanor obscured a profound progressive impulse. "If Truman is nominated," columnists Stuart and Joseph Alsop told their readers, "he will be forced to wage the loneliest campaign in recent history." Democratic Senator William Fulbright proposed that Truman appoint Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg secretary of state and then step down to let Vandenberg take over. Egged on by Hubert Humphrey and Claude Pepper, the left-wing Americans for Democratic Action spearheaded a Committee to Draft Eisenhower. One state political leader sent Truman a telegram requesting him to serve as their chairman. Neither Eisenhower's public inscrutability nor his private sympathies with conservative Republicans deterred the ADA. The war hero, they purred, had the stuff to "stir the popular enthusiasm which will sweep progressive candidates across the country into Congress." "What can we do?" Humphrey, chairman of the ADA, asked another executive officer. "If nothing happens soon, we must act. Eisenhower, of course, would be a winning candidate." Truman triumphed. On his return to Washington, the *Post* greeted Truman with a sign on its building: "Mr. President. We Are Ready Now To Eat Crow Whenever You Are Ready to Serve It."

IN STARK CONTRAST to Truman, John Kennedy exuded an aura of glamour and youth. But in early 1960, his apparent assets were widely viewed as greater liabilities than his Catholicism. On the day Kennedy formally announced his candidacy at the Senate Office Building, a veteran lawmaker, borrowing an old line from New Dealer Harold Ickes, jested that the 42-year-old had just "thrown his diaper into the ring." As a campaigner he looked green to James Reston: "His hands still tremble a bit at the podium as he taps out the rhythm of his sentences." Discounting the polls making Kennedy a frontrunner, Eric Sevareid steeled himself against "the charm of youth alone—or almost alone" that brought "fantastic rewards in this nation of 'fans.'" Pundits, led by Lippmann and the Democratic national chairman, predicted a deadlocked convention at which the more seasoned Lyndon Johnson, Stuart Symington, or Adlai Stevenson would receive the nod.

When Kennedy racked up impressive victories against Hubert Humphrey in West Virginia and Wisconsin, party leaders still suspended belief. Most of Congress sided with Johnson or Symington. In the summer reports of Kennedy's slight slippage gave rise to the New York Democrats' favorite son candidacy of Mayor Robert Wagner. For the good of the party, Eleanor Roosevelt, a liberal icon, urged the Massachusetts senator to take the short end of a Stevenson-Kennedy ticket, where he would have "the opportunity to grow and learn." Just before the convention, ex-president Truman attempted to block the nomination with a nationally televised attack on Kennedy's immaturity. "I may be getting old and I may be getting senile," Arthur Crock snarled at Lippmann's complete conversion to Kennedy, "but at least I don't fall in love with young boys like Walter Lippmann." Of course, voters fell under the Kennedy spell precisely because his vitality heralded an awakening from the listless Eisenhower era. And voters never have to eat crow. □

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More bad news for the attorney general.

DEEPER AND DEEPER

BY JAMES TRAUB

IN EARLY FEBRUARY 1984 E. Robert Wallach, a close friend and legal adviser of Edwin Meese, paid one of his occasional visits to the Bronx headquarters of the defense contractor Wedtech, a company that has since grown infamous for bribing and corrupting its way to fabulous success. Only a few weeks before, on January 23, President Reagan had announced the nomination of Meese to replace William French Smith as attorney general. Sitting in the office of Wedtech's founder and chairman, John Mariotta, Wallach explained that his famous friend, a man of limited means, was unable to afford legal representation in what was likely to be a long and arduous confirmation process. And so Wallach, who for three years had been miraculously clearing a path for Wedtech through the thickets of Washington, offered the executives of the company a simple deal.

If you will pay me the cost of representing Meese, he said, according to testimony given by former Wedtech executives to independent counsel James McKay, you can feel certain that you will get the pontoon contract. Wedtech had been trying to get the Navy to award it a $24 million contract to build pontoon bridges. The firm had received clearance under the Small Business Administration's minority set-aside program to win the contract without competitive bidding. (Although the company's shares were publicly traded, a series of complex stock arrangements allowed Mariotta—of an ethnic descent he liked to describe as "New York Rican"—to claim more than 50 percent control of the company.) Nevertheless, the Navy had only slowly and reluctantly inched toward awarding it the job.

Wedtech's future was looking increasingly grim. The firm's only other large assignment, a 1982 contract to build small engines for the Army, was peaking and phasing out. After some debate, the Wedtech executives agreed to pay Wallach $150,000. The check was drawn by Anthony Guariglia, vice president and chief financial officer.

On April 17 the Navy informed Wedtech that it had been awarded the contract. Wallach boasted that it was his influence on Meese that had carried the day. It's clear, in fact, that congressmen, SBA officials, and Wedtech lobbyist Lyn Nofziger had a lot to do with the decision. But if Meese was influenced by Wedtech's payment to Wallach, Meese would be guilty of a gross violation of ethics-in-government laws—far worse than the infractions for which his former colleague Nofziger, also accused of peddling influence for Wedtech, is now being prosecuted in federal court in Washington. In some ways it might even be worse than Meese's apparent role in the Iraqi oil pipeline near-deal, in which he seems to show his typical cronyism and gross negligence rather than greed. The Wedtech testimony suggests the possibility that Meese was trading government plums for personal financial benefit. The account that follows is based in part on information provided by legal sources familiar with Wedtech's labyrinthine affairs.

Wedtech's executives built a $100 million company out of the rubble of the Bronx not by building a better engine, but by bribing virtually everyone who could have helped them or hurt them. The company's top officers have said so themselves. Several months after they had been indicted in 1986, Fred Neuberger, Mario Moreno, Lawrence Shorten, and Guariglia agreed to cooperate with the government, and began pouring out their litany of corruption to federal prosecutors, state prosecutors, and the independent counsel. (Mariotta refused to cooperate, and faces trial next month.) This information has begun to surface.

The group has accused most of the well-known politicians in the Bronx, figures in the Defense Department and SBA, and executives at the brokerage house Bear Stearns and the Big Eight accounting firm of Main Hurdman of aiding and abetting their corrupt schemes. Wedtech seems to have been bent on proving that every man does have a price, and attorneys familiar with the case expect many more trials, criminal and civil, in the next several years. Testimony by Moreno and Guariglia has played a critical role in the convictions of Clarence and Michael Mitchell, Maryland state legislators who accepted money from Wedtech to influence a congressional inquiry into the SBA overseen by Representative Parren Mitchell, their uncle.

In 1981 Wedtech hired Wallach as a lobbyist, and began paying him lavishly, first in cash and then in stock. (Nofziger and his partner Mark Bragg began working for Wedtech the next year.) A lawyer from San Francisco, Wallach had no inside track at the Pentagon. What he had to offer was his long friendship with Meese, going back to their days in law school at Berkeley. Wallach, by his own admission, sent a stream of memos to his old friend on the merits of the Wedtech bids, and Meese, then presidential counselor, was apparently quick to respond. In 1982, according to testimony at the Nofziger trial, Meese's chief deputy, James Jenkins, virtually ordered the Army to award Wedtech the engine contract, then worth $32 million. It was not a subtle hint. What Jenkins said, one Wedtech executive told McKay's office, was "Cut the bullshit and award the contract." At the Nofziger trial Meese acknowledged receiving several memos from Wallach about Wedtech in 1982, but said that he could not recall their content and did not act on them.

By the fall of 1983 Wedtech again needed some help.

James Traub frequently writes on criminal issues.

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Acting Assistant Secretary of the Navy Everett Pyatt felt, as he told a congressional hearing into Wedtech's lobbying efforts last fall, that the pontoon contract was too large and sophisticated to merit inclusion in the minority set-aside program. Wedtech went into its full-court press, calling on powerful friends in New York and Washington. Bragg spoke with Pyatt several times, according to a sworn affidavit from Mario Moreno. And Wallach reported, in his typical code, that he had spoken with "his friend" about Wedtech's problems. He told Moreno that Meese had in turn talked to Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger.

Pyatt's resolve began to crumble. By mid-January he had become persuaded, he told the congressional hearing, that a minority firm should build the motorized causeways, and that Wedtech, despite its dismal physical plant, could do the job. Still, it was unclear that Wedtech would survive the hard negotiations on price and other issues that lay ahead, especially given Pyatt's original opposition and his reputation for hardheadedness.

Wedtech and its lobbyists saw one promising angle. In June 1983 Pyatt had been appointed acting assistant secretary, yet it had become clear that the White House would not nominate him for the position. Secretary of the Navy John Lehman favored Pyatt's appointment. But Lehman, now a managing director at Paine Webber, says the White House personnel office had been explicit that the assistantship was "a Presidential Level 4 appointment, and only a political appointee would be considered. Pyatt was a registered independent, and he was a career civil servant."

The Wedtech officials who are cooperating with McKay's investigation have offered two accounts of what happened at this point. According to one account, Wedtech executives, through Nofziger or Bragg, offered Pyatt a deal: they would secure his confirmation through their contacts in Washington, and he would award them the pontoon contract. The other account appears in an FBI memo based on conversations with Moreno, who, along with Mariotta, handled the company's political entanglements. The memo, uncovered by the *New York Daily News*, identifies Lehman as the ultimate opponent of the Wedtech contract, and identifies the ubiquitous James Jenkins, who took a job with Wedtech later that year, as the man who "refrained from authorizing" Lehman's nomination of Pyatt. "If Lehman dropped his opposition" to the Wedtech bid, the memo quotes Moreno, Jenkins would let the nomination proceed.

Lehman insists that the Wedtech bid was too small for him to deal with. A government source says that the former Navy secretary did meet with Nofziger, Wedtech's lobbyist, before the awarding of the contract. But there is no evidence Lehman made any deal with Wedtech. On behalf of Pyatt, Navy spokeswoman Lt. Kippy Burns responds, "Secretary Pyatt never had any discussions with any Wedtech official concerning his nomination as assistant secretary of the Navy for shipbuilding and logistics." Pyatt also told the congressional hearing that he had no contact with Bragg or Nofziger prior to awarding the contract, and there is no corroborating evidence that he did so.

But somebody or something unstuck the Pyatt nomination. On April 16, 1984, Everett Pyatt was nominated by President Reagan as assistant secretary of the Navy for shipbuilding and logistics. On April 17 Wedtech was notified it would receive the contract. What did the trick? Could it have been Meese, or his action arm, James Jenkins? "There's always scuttlebutt and gossip," says Lehman, who refused to comment further. A number of former high-ranking Navy officials failed to return repeated phone calls. One of Meese's attorneys, James Rocap, says that Pyatt's nomination had nothing to do with Wedtech, and adds that Meese knew only very generally of the pontoon bid, "presumably from Wallach."

Meese never paid Wallach, or his other attorney, Leonard Garment, for their representation throughout 1984. The government did, however. In late March, a month after the confirmation hearings had begun, a different special prosecutor, Jacob Stein, was appointed to look into allegations that Meese had failed to include on financial-disclosure forms a $15,000 loan to his wife from one Edwin Thomas, and that he had used his influence with the White House personnel office to get three members of the Thomas family appointed to federal jobs. By the fall Stein had concluded that the information did not amount to an indictable offense, hearings resumed, and the Meese nomination was passed by the Senate in February 1985.

An amendment to the 1978 act governing special prosecutors provides that the government will reimburse reasonable legal expenses if no indictment is returned. Garment and Wallach submitted a bill for $720,000, a federal judge awarded Garment about $400,000 and Wallach about $70,000, and that, says Garment, "was the end of it." The additional work of aiding Meese in the confirmation process, he says, was "written off as residual representation." Wallach, it seems, was paid not once but twice for representing Meese—neither time by Meese himself.

THE MISSING LINK in this story, of course, is whether Meese knew that Wedtech had paid Wallach to represent him at his confirmation hearing. There's no evidence he did. In the end, no payment was needed since the government paid for the cost of Meese's representation in the special prosecutor investigation, and the confirmation help was thrown in as a free extra. But in February and March 1984, while Wedtech's bid still hung in the balance, Meese had no reason to believe that the government would pick up his tab.

Rocap, Meese's lawyer, argues that there would have been no tab, since Meese was not formally represented during the hearings. But Wallach said at the time, and Meese adviser Tom Korologos confirms, that Wallach was acting as a legal adviser to Meese throughout the nomination process. Either Wallach was lying to Wedtech, and Meese fully intended to pay him, or the incipient attorney general knew he was getting something for nothing—from Wallach, if not from Wedtech. Meanwhile, Meese felt no apparent qualms about using his position in government to do Wallach valuable favors as well.

A more cautious man might have avoided Wedtech

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once he became the highest law enforcement officer in the land. Not Ed Meese. In May 1985 Wallach steered Meese to Wedtech financial consultant Franklyn Chinn for the investment of a $60,000 "limited blind partnership." Chinn is currently facing racketeering charges for his role in Wedtech, along with Wallach and fellow financier Rusty Kent London.

And it was only in 1985, oddly enough, that Meese met those wonderful Bronx contractors he'd been putting in a good word for all those years. Wallach, Nofziger, and Bragg had always served as the intermediaries. At the Ambassadors Ball late that year, according to one account, Wallach conveyed a party of Wedtech officials and wives over to the corner where Ed Meese and his wife, Ursula, were standing. Mrs. Meese saw them first and, without a word of introduction, burst out, "Oh, you must be the boys from Wedtech!" Ed Meese finally shook hands with his grateful beneficiaries. It must have been a beautiful moment.

The last Ed Meese Quiz

WE *DO* RECALL

BY PAUL SLANSKY

1. Three of these statements were made by Ed Meese. Which was made by George Bush?

a) "You don't have many suspects who are innocent of a crime. That's contradictory. If a person is innocent of a crime, then he is not a suspect."

b) "I would consider myself in the forefront of the civil rights movement in the country today."

c) "There is no one who is more adamant in defense of civil rights, no one who is more opposed to discrimination in any form, no one who is more the champion of minorities, and of all citizens for that matter, than I am."

d) "You know, it's Tension City when you're in there."

2. In 1981 Ed Meese let President Reagan sleep through the U.S. downing of two Libyan fighter jets. What was the president's reaction when asked about it by reporters?

a) He told a rambling story, the point of which seemed to be that he "used to hate those early calls" back in the days when he was "in pictures."

b) He made a terrifying joke about how "that kind of judgment belongs on the Supreme Court."

c) He said, "If our planes were shot down, yes, wake me up right away. If the other fellow's were shot down, why wake me up?"

d) He said, "Anyone that's ever had their kitchen done over knows that it never gets done as soon as you wish it would."

3. True or false? When he has some spare time at home, Ed Meese likes to sit back and power up his police radio scanner.

4. Who is Edwin Thomas?

a) The man who arranged for the sale of Ed Meese's San Diego home, and who was then named deputy undersecretary of the interior.

b) The chairman of the bank that kept loaning Ed Meese money even though he was 15 months behind in his mortgage payments, and who was then named an alternate U.S. delegate to the United Nations.

c) The man who arranged $60,000 in loans for Ed Meese, and who was then appointed to the U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors.

d) The man who loaned Ed Meese's wife, Ursula, $15,000 interest free, and who was then named to head the San Francisco office of the General Services Administration.

5. Which aspect of Ed Meese's Iran-*contra* investigation upset many of his interrogators?

a) Interviewing William Casey and not asking him what he knew about the diversion of funds.

b) Waiting two days to question John Poindexter and then not asking him what President Reagan knew.

c) Conducting crucial interviews one-on-one without taking notes.

d) All of the above, plus his delay in securing Oliver North's files.

6. Which member of the Iran-*contra* committee told Ed Meese that he found Meese's explanation of his conduct of the initial investigation "really very difficult to accept"?

a) George Mitchell
b) Jack Brooks
c) Peter Rodino
d) Warren Rudman

7. Why was an arrest warrant issued for Ed Meese in Los Angeles in 1985?

a) He had failed to pay a five-year-old speeding ticket.
b) He had failed to pay a five-year-old jaywalking ticket.
c) Larry Flynt accused him of stealing the Vicki Morgan tapes.
d) It was an April Fools' joke arranged by the president.

8. True or false? Ed Meese used his White House connections to gain an otherwise undeserved promotion to colonel in the Army Reserve.

9. Ed Meese did three of these things after becoming attorney general. Which did he do *before* assuming that office?

a) He said that a Supreme Court decision "does not establish a 'supreme law of the land.' "

b) He said that management had the responsibility to spy on workers in "locker rooms, parking lots, shipping and mail room areas, and even the nearby taverns" as part of the fight against drugs.

c) He testified a half dozen times before grand juries.

d) He said the ACLU was "part of a criminals' lobby."

Paul Slansky is our nation's leading chronicler of the Reagan administration. His last quiz appeared in the August 31, 1987, issue.

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10. In an effort to avoid deporting Nazi war criminal Karl Linnas to the Soviet Union, Ed Meese tried to secure political asylum for him in what country?

a) Argentina
b) Panama
c) Chile
d) Iran

11. Three of these statements were made by Ed Meese. Which was made by Gary Hart?

a) "When unemployment benefits end, most people find jobs very quickly after that point."

b) "I don't know of any authoritative figures that there are hungry children. I've heard a lot of anecdotal stuff, but I haven't heard any authoritative figures."

c) "I think some people are going to soup kitchens voluntarily. I know we've had considerable information that people go to soup kitchens because the food is free and that that's easier than paying for it. I think that they have money."

d) "This attractive lady whom I had only recently been introduced to dropped into my lap. . . . I chose not to dump her off."

12. Which literary character did Ed Meese claim "had a bad press in his time"?

a) Babbitt
b) Scrooge
c) Gatsby
d) Pinocchio

13. Who has demanded that President Reagan fire "that consummate bungler" Ed Meese?

a) David Broder
b) James Kilpatrick
c) Orrin Hatch
d) Rudolph Giuliani

14. True or false? Ed Meese praised Philadelphia Mayor Wilson Goode's bombing of the MOVE headquarters as "a good example for us all to take note of. . . . The situation that gave rise to the tragedy was caused by the criminals, not the police."

15. Who is Jacob A. Stein?

a) The first of Ed Meese's record-setting three special prosecutors.

b) A member of the 1964 Berkeley Free Speech Movement who was prosecuted by then Deputy District Attorney Ed Meese.

c) The aide to Ed Meese who pressured the Army to sign a contract with the company now known as Wedtech.

d) The aide who arranged for Ed Meese to receive his pornography commission's report in front of a bare-breasted statue.

16. Alameda County Superior Court Judge Stanley P. Golde has known Ed Meese for over 20 years. How did he describe him?

a) "He may not always look like it, but he's thinking all the time."

b) "He loves going after goldfish with a cannon."

c) "His passion for law enforcement is unusual in a man with so little respect for actual law."

d) "He has a big square head, several chins, and his eyes are way too close together."

Matching question: Who's Who in Ed Meese's World?

17. W. Franklyn Chinn	a) Ed Meese's former lawyer, now indicted in the Wedtech scandal
18. T. Kenneth Cribb	b) Ed Meese's closest aide
19. E. Robert Wallach	c) Ed Meese's former White House colleague, now indicted in the Wedtech scandal
20. Terry Eastland	d) Ed Meese's Justice Department spokesman
21. Herbert E. Ellingwood	e) Ed Meese's former investment counselor, now indicted in the Wedtech scandal
22. Lyn Nofziger	f) Ed Meese's closest Christian fundamentalist friend

23. Which statement by Ed Meese was met with laughter from his audience?

a) His claim that he didn't remember receiving six memos concerning the stolen Carter briefing books.

b) His claim that legislation he supported to weaken the 1968 Gun Control Act was "not as dangerous a bill as some of the opponents have indicated."

c) His claim that he didn't remember being lobbied on Wedtech by Lyn Nofziger.

d) His claim that "we don't care about the political or ideological allegiance of a prospective judge."

24. What company did Ursula Meese use her interest-free loan to buy stock in?

a) Southern Air Transport
b) Welbilt
c) Biotech
d) General Dynamics

25. Who described Ed Meese's constitutional views as "little more than arrogance cloaked as humility"?

a) Justice William Brennan
b) Senator Howard Baker
c) Secretary of State Alexander Haig
d) Justice Thurgood Marshall

26. How did Ed Meese defend his plan to drug-test teachers?

a) He said, "The future of our children is too important to be jeopardized by a pernicious lobby of constitutional nitpickers."

b) He pointed out that the courts have upheld the legality of testing for racehorse jockeys and said, "It seems to me almost an insult to teachers to maintain that their jobs are any less important."

c) He said he'd "cleared it with Nancy."

d) He said, "In the long run, it's cheaper than spying on them."

27. Why did President Reagan pose for pictures with his

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arm around Ed Meese?

a) To express support for him at a time when the media was bashing him over the Bork and Ginsburg fiasco.

b) To express support for him at a time when the media was bashing him over his handling of the Cuban detainees' prison riot.

c) To express support for him at a time when the media was bashing him over his conflict of interest regarding his stock in the "Baby Bell" telephone companies.

d) To express support for him at a time when the media was bashing him over a letter his wife wrote to a judge asking for a lenient sentence for a young man her daughter knew who was convicted of tax fraud.

28. Which institution awarded its medal for Distinguished Public Service to Ed Meese?

a) Bob Jones University

b) Eureka College

c) UC Berkeley

d) Harvard's Kennedy School of Government

29. How did Ed Meese refer to nuclear war?

a) "Ellingwood's Rapture"

b) "The Big Enchilada"

c) "Lights Out"

d) "Something that may not be desirable"

30. What did Ed Meese say the Founding Fathers would find "somewhat bizarre"?

a) The progressive income tax

b) Affirmative action

c) Recent Supreme Court rulings on separation of church and state

d) Senate hostility to judicial nominees Jefferson Sessions and Daniel Manion

31. How did Ed Meese explain his failure to take any action regarding his friend E. Robert Wallach's 1985 memo proposing the bribing of Israeli officials in connection with the construction of a billion-dollar Iraqi oil pipeline?

a) He said he didn't recall ever meeting "Bob *Wallace*, was that his name?"

b) He said he wasn't sure he could "find Iraq on a map."

c) He said he was at the Army-Navy game with George Bush the day that memo came in.

d) He said he didn't recall reading that particular part of the memo, but now that he went back and looked at it, he found that this thing that the media is jumping out of its shorts about was actually only ten words long—ten words out of two long documents—and, when you look at them, rather innocuous words at that, not at all the kind of words (like "bribe," or maybe "payoff") that would set off a normal man's alarms.

Matching question: Who Said What About Ed Meese?

32. Joseph Coors — a) "He was an Oakland prosecutor who was lucky enough to know Ronald Reagan."

33. John B. Oakes — b) "He's no embarrassment to me."

34. Laurence Tribe — c) "He is certainly innocent in one respect. He is innocent of any awareness that the chief law enforcement officer of the United States must scrupulously avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest, evasion of the law, or lethargy in enforcing it."

35. Alexander Haig — d) "Ed Meese is one of the greatest Americans there is."

36. Ronald Reagan — e) "Have you ever met Ed Meese? My God!"

37. Why does Ed Meese collect figurines of pigs?

a) Pigs are extremely intelligent animals and Meese worships at the shrine of intelligence.

b) It's a personality quirk that grew out of a rather severe childhood bout with trichinosis.

c) It's his tribute to the police, who were called "pigs" by protesters in the '60s.

d) He has an irresistible affinity for things porcine.

38. During his 1985 confirmation hearing, Ed Meese said, "If there were any doubt in my mind that four years from now you could look back and say, 'Ed Meese has fulfilled the standards that I've set for this office,' then I would retire and withdraw right now." To which of his critics was he speaking?

a) Senator Howard Metzenbaum

b) Senator Joseph Biden

c) Senator Carl Levin

d) Senator Edward Kennedy

39. Three of these statements were made by Ed Meese. Which was made by a disgruntled Justice Department official?

a) "Brad Reynolds has proved to be nothing less than the most powerful advocate of civil rights in our time."

b) "*Miranda* only helps guilty defendants. Most innocent people are glad to talk to the police. They want to establish their innocence so that they're no longer a suspect."

c) "When you say hungry kids, you're talking about *allegations* that there are hungry kids."

d) "It's gotten to the point where I think some of the people are embarrassed saying at a cocktail party that they work for the Justice Department. You see the person you're talking to jump back in alarm."

40. True or false? While giving private depositions to the Iran-*contra* committee, Ed Meese found himself the victim of recollection failure over 350 times.

Answers:
1) d; 2) c; 3) True; 4) d; 5) d; 6) a; 7) b; 8) True; 9) d; 10) b; 11) d; 12) b; 13) b; 14) True; 15) a; 16) b; 17) e; 18) b; 19) a; 20) d; 21) f; 22) c; 23) d; 24) c; 25) a; 26) b; 27) a; 28) d; 29) d; 30) c; 31) d; 32) d; 33) c; 34) a; 35) e; 36) b; 37) c; 38) b; 39) d; 40) False. It was actually only 340 times.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Out of Context

Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, according to some, is a great novel. Maybe. Of greatness, tomorrow's critics are better judges than today's. But one point is sure: Kundera is the greatest café companion imaginable. To be seated across a small table from him with drinks or coffee cups between us, which is where his books seem to put me, certi-

The Unbearable Lightness of Being
(Orion)

fies the sometimes dubious existence of civilization, even though his discourse wryly turns civilization over to show its underside.

What wit, what tacit grief, what quiet terror, what fresh insight into received ideas, what poignant interplay between eroticism and the political climate in which various lovers go to bed. And what nonchalance about traditional novelistic structure—a blitheness tolerable only in a writer with diamond-cutter's control. Reviewing an earlier Kundera novel, Robert M. Adams wrote:

> A constant interweaving of fantasy and realism, surreal metaphor and prosaic literalness, is characteristic of Kundera's technique. He intervenes frequently to address his readers directly, question his characters, recite his own experiences, or account for his authorial proceedings. He is particularly careful to leave undefined the relations between episodes of his novel; it is the reader's business to make of these relations what he can. Again and again in this artfully artless book an act or gesture turns imperceptibly into its exact opposite.... These subtle transformations and unemphasized points of correspondence are the special privileges of a meticulously crafted fiction.

Word for word these comments apply also to *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. I would add only, in small dissent, that Kundera's intent to charm, and the knowing pathos of that charm because it comes from an exile writing about a country in bondage, is ultimately a bit theatrical.

Still, I've quoted Adams at length because he cites the important aspects of Kundera's work, and it is precisely those aspects that are missing from the new film of *Lightness*. Only a director with gifts analogous to Kundera's might have approximated the book's "artfully artless" qualities—say a Godard or Makavejev at his best. Otherwise we were bound to get more or less what we got: plot elements extracted, connected, expanded, contracted. The depth and sparkle and shadow of Kundera's novel depend on the different glimpses of his story he gives us as he talks all around it. Without that context, the story itself is rather banal, disjointed, arbitrarily maneuvered; and without that context, the film has only a tenuous relation to the book.

Does knowledge of the book prejudice a prospective viewer of the film? Well, it made this prospective viewer hopeful. I hoped that Philip Kaufman, the director and co-author of the screenplay, would expand the capabilities he suggested in the past. (*The Right Stuff* and a remake of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* are his two best previous films, both of them competently done.) I hoped that Jean-Claude Carrière, the co-author, who often worked with Buñuel, among others, would help to liberate the screenplay from convention. But the collaborators chose to make a film of a book that Kundera expressly did not write, a traditional, continuous, mostly present-tense novel.

Not only are the characters shorn of the Kundera context, they are shorn of characteristics so that they can slip more neatly into regular film slots. Of course the book had to be compressed—the picture runs almost three hours anyway—but Kaufman and Carrière have done their compressing less with an eye to condensing the original than to transforming it into a well-behaved film with good conventional narrative manners. Tomas, the central figure, is shorn of a previous marriage and of the son who grows to manhood and a life contrapuntal to his father's. The three other chief characters—Tereza, Tomas's wife; Sabina, his most recurrent mistress; and Franz, Sabina's principal other lover—are also shorn. Sabina comes off best for a negative reason: there's less of her background in the book to shear away.

Virtually none of the themes that Kundera weaves through his novel, that give the novel *its* character, is broached: compassion, cyclical repetition, Beethoven, the theological implications of shit—others, many others. As for the theme in the title, it's mentioned once. (I don't know what the title can mean to those who haven't read the book.) So is kitsch, which is one of Kundera's major motifs. The Oedipus theme is mentioned only to be mangled.

What we are left with is just a story, not particularly enthralling in itself. In the Prague of 1968 lives and works an attractive, philandering young brain surgeon named Tomas. The film opens in a hospital where a nurse strips for him behind clouded glass while other doctors watch; even their patient sits up to look. This beginning made me expectant. Had they made the book into a comedy? This would emphasize only one of its tones, still it might make a

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Broadcast News. The dialogue bubbles, the acting is deft. They give this comedy about TV newscasters a promise of depth it doesn't have; but it *is* entertaining. (Reviewed 2/1/88)

The Dead. Anjelica Huston's performance is her late father's last gift to us. The film as a whole, however, shows that good intentions are not enough: Joyce's masterpiece cannot be transmuted. (12/21/87)

House of Games. David Mamet wrote and directed this seemingly realistic but really abstract drama about the place of deceit in our world and in ourselves. Excellent. (11/16/87)

Housekeeping. Extraordinary acting, writing, directing in this seemingly gentle but basically mysterious domestic comedy. Two orphaned young sisters and their eccentric aunt in a Northwest town are haunted by the spirit of the frontier. (1/18/88)

SK

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lively picture. Soon, however, the pace slowed to a plod, relieved—frequently—by passionate couplings.

Tomas's meeting with Tereza, his falling in love, their marriage, their flight to Geneva after the Soviet invasion, their return, the results of Tomas's one overt political action, the Sabina episodes with and without Tomas—all these are stitched into sequence, but the more we see, the thinner the film becomes. Even (or especially) when incidents are expanded from the novel, they are thinned. The marriage, which is one sentence in the book, is spun out into a heavily comic "big" scene. The nude photographing of Sabina by Tereza and vice versa is much expanded and is given a homoerotic suggestion. (The book treats the scene as a teasing frolic between two members of Tomas's harem.) These scenes are typical of Kaufman and Carrière's predictable choices, which eat up screen time that might have been used to Kundera's advantage.

There are good touches. Early in the film Tomas goes to a hospital in a spa to perform brain surgery. Outside, a band is playing a waltz; Tomas hums along as he saws his patient's skull. The Soviet invasion of Prague is excellently done—Sven Nykvist is the cinematographer—blending newsreels with shots that include Tomas and Tereza. (Still, riots may not be so difficult: the best part of Spielberg's attenuated *Empire of the Sun* is the rioting in Shanghai.) And the screenplay honors one point in the book: Kundera's insistence that we know in advance about the fate of Tomas and Tereza. The film, like the book, ends with ironic happiness—their finish just ahead of them.

The film's best investment is in the cast, and Kaufman's best achievement is what he does with his actors. Juliette Binoche, the French actress who was in *Rouge Baiser*, gives Tereza the right vulnerability and sweetness and desperate strength. The Sabina is Lena Olin, the Swedish actress who was the young woman in Bergman's *After the Rehearsal* (1984). How Olin has grown in spirit, guile, variety. She creates—to use an old-fashioned noun—a true bohemian. The Dutch actor Derek de Lint is appealing in what is left of Franz's character. (Because of the international cast, I'd better note that the film is in English.)

Daniel Day-Lewis, who was the cockney gay in *My Beautiful Laundrette* and the Edwardian prig in *Room with a View*, comes on like a house afire as Tomas.

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Scandinavia	Airfare 2 Weeks, Hotel*	$ 499	$ 803
Tokyo	Airfare Only	$ 627	$ 851
Hong Kong	Airfare Only	$ 660	$ 850
Bahamas Cruise	5 Day Cruise*	$ 385	$ 585
Caribbean Cruise	Airfare 1 Week Cruise*	$ 540	$ 1040
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(His hair darkened, he looks like a more supple Maximilian Schell.) But Day-Lewis's role is so sparely written, its dialogue so bald and trite, that the director seems to have relied on him to fill it out with acting. Day-Lewis tries his best. For instance, every time someone opens a door and finds him on the threshold, he goes through a little facial ballet to suggest complexities around the skimpy lines he is given to speak. It's clear that if the part had really been written, instead of being sketched at length, Day-Lewis could have carried it.

What Castro is doing to the Cuban cinema.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, COMMUNISM

BY NESTOR ALMENDROS

DICTATORS TEND TO like movies. Benito Mussolini ordered the construction, in 1938, of Cinecittá, the most monumental film studios in Europe. Stalin, according to his daughter's biography, presided over the outfitting of a magnificent private projection room in his Kremlin apartments; the rise and fall of Soviet filmmakers depended on his tastes and his moods. Juan Perón and Mao Zedong shared the fascination, to the extent that each married an actress of the silver screen. Francisco Franco was not known for his literary achievement, apart from his speeches, but he seems to have had the fantasy of being a writer for the movies; in 1940, under the pseudonym Jaime de Andrade, he wrote a film script entitled, significantly, *Race*. It was filmed on a huge budget in the first days after the victory of the "glorious national movement," and it opened with great pomp, as the model for an epic Spanish cinema. The Maximum Leader of the Cuban revolution does not escape the rule. Having created, in 1979, the International Film Festival of Havana (it drew many people to the Cuban capital this past December), he inaugurated a film school too.

From its earliest moments, the revolutionary government of Cuba has evinced a particular interest in the cinema. Lenin's maxim that "the cinema is the most important art for us" has been followed down to the last detail, even to the neglect of television. In 1960 the new government nationalized all existing film companies. But it is worth noting that, contrary to what now amounts to official history, the Castro regime did not create Cuban cinema out of nothing. Films were made in Cuba even before the introduction of sound; the democratic government of Carlos Prío (1948-52) even constructed sizable studios in Cubanacán. The revolutionary regime immediately seized them, but not without changing their names and taking credit for their creation. Soon the government began to acquire more up-to-date and costly film equipment abroad.

It is a well-documented fact that in the first two years after Castro's seizure of power the Communist option was hidden from the people of Cuba. The plan was to avoid panic, and to gain time to complete the subterranean organization of power. In all sectors of society, but especially in art and culture, the strategy was to appoint to highly visible posts persons known for their political neutrality. The situation of the film industry, however, was different. Castro placed at its head a friend and confidant who was also a well-known Communist, Alfredo Guevara Valdés; and Guevara Valdés brought in two other party professionals, Julio García Espinosa and Santiago Alvarez. Thus the cinema was, from the very beginning, the only sector of Cuban society wholly and openly in the hands of the Communists.

Naturally there was a need for artists and technicians. The regime still had not created the well-trained cadres of later years; it had no choice, therefore, but to rely on "doubtful" elements, in the hope of assimilating them. That is how many of us came to work at the Cuban Institute of Cinematic Art and Industry (known as the ICAIC). But the leaders miscalculated. It took us no time at all to realize that we were merely cogs in the wheel of a larger machine, whose purpose was to transmit ideas in the service of power. We began our work with the naive goodwill of youth. We believed, not altogether responsibly, that it would be possible to do independent work, truly revolutionary work. As the months passed, our misconceptions disappeared, our impatience grew. Desertions followed swiftly.

Film industries in all the Communist countries have known desertions, some as important as Roman Polanski, Milos Forman, or Andrei Tarkovsky. Still, I do not believe that any country has experienced an exodus of film stars and film technicians as large as Cuba's. One need only consult the first issues of *Cine Cubano*, the official journal of the ICAIC, between 1960 and 1965. Of the ten directors of full-length films mentioned in its pages, five chose exile: Eduardo Manet, Fausto Canel, Alberto Roldán, Roberto Fandiño, Fernando Villaverde. All were directors who had won prizes and prestige for the new Cuba at film festivals abroad, even as their films were censored or proscribed at home.

At the same time there was a great exodus of scriptwriters (Guillermo Cabrera Infante, René Jordán, Antonio Benítez Rojo, Edmundo Desnoes) and technicians (the best known was Ramón F. Suárez, who has since made a name for himself in the French cinema; he was the photographer responsible for the first and most important films of Tomás Gutiérrez Alea). Even the designer of ICAIC's famous posters, Tony Reboiro, eventually left. The list is most impressive in the areas of music, singing, and dancing.

There is a curious symmetry here with the Stalinist period in the Soviet Union: all of these people disappeared without a trace from Cuban filmographies, and the films of the five directors mentioned above were never shown again. The artists and the technicians who emigrated have simply ceased to exist as far as the Cuban government and its film institute are concerned. According to the official histories, such films as *Historia de la revolución* and *Lucia* now lack male leads. *Muerte de un burócrata* (*Death of a Bureaucrat*) and *Memorias del subdesarollo* (*Memories of Underdevelopment*) have mysteriously "lost" their cinematographer, Suárez, who now lives in Paris. My own name has often been crudely snipped from the titles of films I shot, such as *Kramer vs. Kramer* and *The Blue Lagoon*. (Only at the

Nestor Almendros, the cinematographer, won an Academy Award in 1978 for *Days of Heaven*. He is the author of *A Man with a Camera* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux).

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last minute, according to reliable sources, did the authorities decide to tolerate the offensive appearance of my name in recent screenings of *Sophie's Choice*.)

In the heady days of 1959-61, there briefly existed a marginally independent Cuban cinema, alongside the ICAIC. But suddenly Orlando Jiménez Leal, Sabás, Cabrera Infante, and myself, among others, found ourselves in a difficult situation, shaken by a political hurricane that would transform our lives. It all began with a small and inoffensive 16mm documentary made by Jiménez Leal, Sabás, and Cabrera Infante, entitled *P.M.* It was done in the style of cinema verité, which was just coming into fashion—hand-held camera, images spontaneously "surprised" in reality, no attempt at direction, street noises or popular music in the background. The film was a tour of the old bars and cafés of Havana and Marianao; it described, without complacency but also without complaint, what remained of nightlife in Cuba.

When the short film opened, the reaction was overwhelming: one print, and the negative, were seized by the police. Its makers were practically put in the dock. The cultural magazine *Lunes de Revolución*, which had sponsored the film, was shut down. I lost my job, for having imprudently defended the film in the magazine *Bohemia*, where I worked as a film critic. The panic that ensued in intellectual circles in Havana led Castro to convoke a huge meeting in which, he promised, he would inform himself of the facts of the case and make amends. Remember that the revolution had proclaimed itself to be "humanist," open to all ideas, free of dogmas.

It is highly significant that the first false note of the revolution was sounded about the cinema. In the closing moments of that meeting, Castro delivered his famous speech, "Palabras a los intelectuales," "Advice for Intellectuals." Recognizing that there was "a certain climate of fear," Castro added a calming, even conciliatory note:

> Permit me to say to you that in the first place the Revolution defends freedom; that the Revolution has brought a huge number of freedoms. . . . If the concern of some is that the Revolution may have drowned its own creative spirit, this is an unnecessary concern, which has no reason for being.

But this soon proved to be a rhetorical tactic. Our hopes of justice disappeared even as he spoke. He went on to approve the action of the censors, and to endorse the right of the ICAIC to confiscate the film. Once and for all, the limits of artistic endeavor in Cuba were fixed. He said, "What are the rights of writers and artists? Within the revolution, everything; against the revolution, nothing."

What was held against the film? Really very little. Only that it had not been produced by the ICAIC, and therefore had escaped state control—a bad example for the future. And that it had not been "useful" to the revolution, which is to say, it had not sung praises to the new dawn that awaited Cuba and its people. In other words *P.M.*, while not "committed" to the revolution, was not counterrevolutionary either. Or so we argued. A print of *P.M.* miraculously escaped the police and was spirited out of Cuba; it was recently exhibited in festivals in New York, Miami, and Paris. It seems almost stupefying today that so much dust could have been kicked up around it, that such a fury of intolerance could have been unleashed by so little. But *P.M.* was merely a pretext.

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Exile has been hard for some; and some it has defeated. For others, it has been a good fortune, though it came disguised as disgrace. For some of us, it has been like the cold light of dawn that roused us from a nightmare. Jiménez Leal has distinguished himself with several major productions, including *The Super*, a witty, bittersweet comedy about a Cuban superintendent of a Manhattan apartment building, which won major prizes at festivals in Venice, Biarritz, and Mannheim. His collaborator, León Ichaso, made another brilliant work, *Crossover Dreams*, which describes the hybrid musical culture of the Latins in New York.

In the ICAIC, Canel, Fandiño, and Humberto López Guerra made only shorts, but in Europe they have had brilliant new careers. And others, very young, almost children when they left Cuba, have distinguished themselves in Latin America—Jorge Ulla, Orestes Matacena, Miñuca Villaverde, Camilo Vila, Iván Acosta . . . and there are others. They were forced to leave their country, but really they have never left it. It endures in their thoughts, in the themes and the concerns of almost all of their films.

The vast resources employed by the Cuban government to promote its films abroad bear no relationship to the modest interest that its films provoke. Recent Cuban films have been shown in various

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European cities, accompanied by extravagant catalogs and amply supported by local Communist parties, but these showings have attracted sparse audiences. I went to one. When the lights went up, I recognized some faces: Cuban exiles who were drawn, like me, by curiosity and by nostalgia to see, at least on the screen, the country we had lost. That is to say, Havana had paid the transportation and the customs duties, had hired the hall, had printed the programs, so that we stray cats, or should I say, more precisely, stray worms, could bring ourselves up to date.

I do not pretend that everything that has been accomplished in the Cuban cinema since the revolution is lacking in interest. There were, particularly in the first years, some fine productions. But I do believe—on this almost everyone agrees—that in the last few years there has been a notable loss of creativity. If, in the early days, it was possible to thumb one's nose at the censor, the censor is now acting with greater force. In the beginning there was plenty of material in the struggle against Batista. But 25 years later, with a new system in power, there is no choice but to analyze the present. And that is where the difficulties begin.

Like the French cinema under Nazi occupation, or the Spanish cinema under Franco, the recent Cuban cinema displays a vast proliferation of wigs, frock coats, and horse-drawn coaches. In these remote zones of history, directors have been able to take refuge and run no risks. Still, dogma is dogma, and the cinema continues to be the most important of all the arts. The Cuban state, in debt up to its eyebrows to both East and West, with growing economic difficulties, with a system of severe rationing 25 years old, with an acute need of foreign exchange, nonetheless embarked on grandiose and expensive new projects—first an annual International Film Festival, and now a School of Cinema and Television.

It is not generosity toward art for art's sake that moves Castro's government. Its film institutions represent, rather, an effort to penetrate the Third World, and to increase Cuba's influence. The task might be a little awkward for the Soviets; better to farm it out to the Cubans, who still maintain, for historical and climatic reasons, the image of a Third World country. (Just as the Soviets, particularly after the moral defeat in Afghanistan, don't dare send troops to Africa, preferring to use the Cubans.) The School of Cinema and Television, according to its catalog, "is intended for students from Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia." The school already has 82 students, all on scholarship, representing three continents. In San Antonio de los Baños, near Havana, the government has constructed classrooms, dormitories, studios, even a swimming pool. Since the comandante likes uniforms, the students have uniforms, too. In a recent interview in the official daily *Granma*, under the headline "I AM SURE THE SCHOOL WILL BE A SUCCESS," Castro proposed "a useful, enlightening, wholesome, and educational cinema. . . . It will be a kind of larger school in which to educate the entire people." In addition to the school, Castro has created the Foundation for the New Latin American Cinema, headed by the ubiquitous Gabriel García Márquez, who is always ready for one more fling on the dance floor of Cuban politics.

DURING the '60s Cuba tried in vain to convert itself into a great center of revolutionary culture. The regime sponsored countless literary competitions and art exhibits and generously invited European intellectuals. For a time there was a favorable, even an enthusiastic response. Despite the attraction of an all-expenses-paid holiday in the Caribbean, however, the project did not pay off. In the long run, the critical spirit of a continent on its way back from precisely such things prevailed. Cuba lost prestige, and what is worse, it ceased to be the fashion. The jailing of the dissident poet Heberto Padilla provoked widespread protests from many of the same intellectuals who had enjoyed official Cuban hospitality; it was their opposition, in 1970, that marked the moment of change.

Probably aware of this failure, Castro narrowed his angle of vision. Now the focus is not on art in general, but on the cinema in particular; now the seduction is directed not at the whole world, but at the Third World. Even so, it is not certain that Cuba's cultural bureaucrats will achieve their purposes. The artist in any latitude, if he is worthy of the name, is difficult to control. Of those 82 students, many will turn out to be dissidents. (They will probably be the most talented of the lot.) After all, it was from Mussolini's *Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia* in Cinecittá that

THE WOMAN WHO MARRIED HER BROTHER-IN-LAW

I was living happily in Boston when he called:
"Will you fly on a crow's back back to Houston?"

"I don't love you—romantically," I replied.
I am not pretty and do not speak well.

"No matter," he argued. "That will come."
I returned, and we had a lovely courtship, then

wedding. When people ask me, "Do you love
him?" I am honest. I say, "No, but he is

the best of good husbands so I can't complain."
Forty years together and I never loved

my first husband either. My background, I suppose;
it's my background: undemonstrative.

I don't remember my mother kissing or
hugging my brother, my sister, or me.

She was sort of . . . Victorian. But my sister
and I were close anyway. Since I married

her husband, I moved into her old house, wear her
old clothes he never removed.

Last week was her birthday. I saw myself
buried with her, felt her in my bones. But I,

who don't know about feelings, am content.
It hardly matters at all.

SYBIL P. ESTESS

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the anti-fascist directors of Italian neorealism emerged. And it was the official film school in Lodz, Poland, that produced the filmmakers of Solidarity.

In film, as in everything Cuban, one must begin by taking into account the unstable personality of the Maximum Leader. Every five years or so there is a new caprice. The comandante sets out furiously to reach a new goal, dragging behind him an entire nation and upsetting its economy: the coffee belt around Havana, the ten million ton harvest, and so on. Along the way, he loses interest, or simply drops the project, and nothing more is heard of it. A new toy now fascinates Castro: film, the festival, and the school. What next?

THE NEW HISTORICISM

Shakespearean Negotiations by Stephen Greenblatt

(University of California Press, 205 pp., $20)

The Place of the Stage: License, Play and Power in Renaissance England by Steven Mullaney

(University of Chicago Press, 178 pp., $24.95)

External observers must have noticed abundant signs of tumult in the world of academic literary criticism. Some, remarking with dismay the proliferation of forbiddingly obscure titles, may have lost interest or given up the hope of discovering what is going on. University teachers of English—the body of men and women who consider themselves charged with the duty of doing the nation's serious reading—seem to be talking copiously, but only to one another. Moreover, their world is, though reasonably polite, unremittingly competitive; there is a ceaseless struggle for preeminence and visibility, which helps to explain the ever more rapid succession of novel methods and theories.

In calmer and more timid times, academic criticism, fearing to seem inexact or unscientific, took a protective coloring from the respectable disciplines of history and philology. After World War II, however, there were great changes, partly caused by the huge expansion of the universities. An enormous increase in the numbers of students seeking to be taught English required comparable reinforcements in faculty, who became more various, less learned in some ways (in history and in philology, for instance) and in other ways more adventurous and ambitious. The New Criticism called for attention to the text, rather than to any context; and that entailed a principled devaluation of history. This kind of criticism was labeled "formalism" by friend and foe alike.

During the '60s we saw the brief triumph of structuralism (another variety of formalism, very different but still devaluing history). It still has its practitioners, but most would now agree that its main importance was to usher in various post-structuralisms, of which the most central and most thrilling has been deconstruction. The true home of deconstruction is in philosophy, and its main exemplar and exponent, Jacques Derrida, is by training and vocation and practice a philosopher. But deconstruction naturally does not encourage the maintenance of deconstructible boundaries between disciplines, and its principal strategy—roughly, to ask what a text is inadvertently saying, in contradiction to its more ostensible sense—is easily transferred to literature.

The transfer has two consequences of concern here. First, the differential techniques of deconstruction are often simplified to the point where the critical results are distinguishable from the older kind of formalism only by the use of the patented jargon, and by an interpretative liberty that some old fogeys cannot distinguish from license. Second, the collapse of the old disciplinary limits has radically altered the focus of literary studies, which are now eclectically

Vint Lawrence

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philosophical, anthropological, sociological, psychoanalytical, and up to the minute in all of these respects. This is true not only of soi-disant deconstructors; others have joined in. The Marxists, though suspicious of the new philosophy, have allowed it to modify their ways of talking about texts and contexts. The feminists, some of them anyway, have also taken it aboard. Fashionable literary criticism is now about much more than literary texts.

ONE OF THE most recent varieties actually calls for a return to history. It is indeed called "neo-historicism" or "the new historicism" in the United States. (Similar work in England is identified as "cultural materialism," and by that name acknowledges the late Raymond Williams as a progenitor.) Its practitioners everywhere have reacted directly to the two consequences of deconstruction named above. They eschew ludic license, and they study literature in a wide context of contemporary social-historical discourses. As their American name suggests, they represent some kind of return to pre-formalism and to history; but it is a commodious recirculation made with no intention of reoccupying precisely the old position. This is history from a very different set of perspectives, provided by Michel Foucault and others.

What are the constraints on the way a period "thinks"? What is the relation between the discourse of literature and the discourses of contemporary power? It is all a long way from the old Marxist historicist diagrams, though it is there that we might find its roots, as indeed the name of the British movement suggests. Meanwhile sophisticated neo-Marxisms, a developing interest in hermeneutics, and a lot of other factors have combined to justify the neo in neo-historicism.

Though the mood of this new movement isn't predominantly polemical, it is obviously opposed to old-style "bourgeois liberalism," a wimpish doctrine hardly deserving to be so described. Those who hold it have simply failed to see that the notion of the autonomous individual is nothing but a fiction concealing the truth that each of us is merely a random meeting point for rival power discourses. The history of individualism is the history of this fictive self-fashioning, the history, therefore, of a lie by which we pretend not to be enslaved.

It is fundamentally a melancholy attitude. Those who express it must be conscious that they themselves are not exempt from its logic: they too must be the puppets of discourses they never made, which is perhaps why their writings lack the bounce and cheek of more libertarian post-structuralists. Their tragic situation calls for a measure of self-effacement, a lot of serious documentation, and very little levity (though Stephen Greenblatt does tell a joke or two). One agreeable consequence is tonal. These books are written with a gravity that is even slightly ostentatious; they couldn't conceivably be confused with those written by critics who, believing there is no difference between criticism and "primary" literature, come at us like highly individual and autonomous poets, all flashing eye and floating hair.

OF COURSE this preliminary account of neo-historicism is very crude. It is meant only as a minimal explanation of its attractiveness. The acknowledged leader of the school—a man with a growing international reputation—is Stephen Greenblatt of Berkeley. He is a Renaissance specialist, and concerns himself, as Burckhardt did long ago, with the character and the origins of Renaissance individualism, though he naturally comes up with different answers. Shakespeare, and especially his theater, are central to Greenblatt's meditations, as they are to those of Steven Mullaney, who teaches at Ann Arbor but has obvious associations with northern California and with Greenblatt. Between them these books should give a fair idea of how the new historicism works on its central ground.

Greenblatt opens his book with a rather moving credo. Much as he would like to think of great artists as totalities in relation to whatever society in which they may live, he is convinced that all texts are "sites of institutional and ideological contestation." His way of examining them will be to look at the margins of a text for traces of its transactions with power discourses outside it, for its "dynamic exchanges" with the institutions of society at large. For this operation, the theater offers an ideal situation: it is marked off by obvious conventions and by assumptions from "real life," from the circumambient world, yet it has easily permeable boundaries.

Thus the history plays of Shakespeare can represent or mirror political hierarchies, but at the same time distort or subvert them. The transvestite comedies will do the same for sexual law and custom, and the tragedies for religious rituals handed over to them by the official church. Like other historians, Greenblatt has an ambition "to speak with the dead," but to do that truly one needs to see the dead or their traces as in large measure "the products of collective negotiation and exchange." He knows that over time the mode of our response to these traces must vary—everything changed, for instance, when Shakespeare became a book rather than a theatrical repertoire—but his aim is to get as close as possible to those primordial negotiations.

THE ACTUAL method seems to be to choose a point near the periphery of possible relations, to "swerve" away from the central text and then move in toward it, with a view to enriching the understanding of it by bringing to bear on the center this information about the remote partner in a lost "negotiation." Thus the chapter on comedy opens with a reference to a case reported by Montaigne, in which a peasant woman who passed as a man was hanged because she "married" a woman and used "illicit devices to supply her defect in sex." A little later there follows a detailed account of a similar "marriage," borrowed from a treatise on hermaphroditism. Greenblatt wants to demonstrate the essential instability of what was officially regarded as the most stable of all the social and anthropological givens of the period, namely the man-woman difference, "the foundation of all individuation."

A lot of this information is fascinating in itself. For example, it was thought that the female sex had male organs imperfectly developed and was therefore weaker and colder and more in need of enticements to sexual activity. A great deal of foreplay or "libidinous tickling" was needed to bring them up to the temperature at which their supposititious sperm could successfully blend with the male's, as was necessary for conception. (The ovaries had not yet been identified.) Greenblatt thinks the men-women dialogues and the "dallying with words" in Shakespearean comedy are a counterpart of this "erotic chafing": fiction and friction become one in the theater, and "the theatrical representation of individuality is in effect modeled on what the culture thought occurred during sexual foreplay and intercourse."

This strikes me as more engaging than plausible, though it isn't difficult to understand that boys acting girls pretend-

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ing to be boys could be a rich source of titillation. (In fact it has been shown by others to have been so.) In the end, as Greenblatt remarks, the sexual chaos is resolved, Nature is shown to be true to her bias, and the women marry not women but men, the men not men but women. But since the cast is, in fact, all male, there is some residual confusion of discourses even then.

Despite the charm of all the peripheral detail, I couldn't help feeling that there was a weakening of interest when the plays themselves were directly addressed. There is a great quantity of sexological or political sack, but only a pennyworth of interpretative bread. The chapter with *King Lear* at its putative center tells us a lot about exorcism as practiced by Jesuit missionaries and condemned by the official church. The point is that Shakespeare, using Harsnett's *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*, a well-known source, took over the exorcism that the church discarded, but returned it as a fiction, as the theatrical illusion Harsnett said it was, though at the same time subverting official doctrine—"a simultaneous appropriation and swerving from the discourse of power." This is a characteristic "negotiation" between theater and the structures of power. It is illustrated by much the same method (itself one of swerving and appropriation) in the chapter on *The Tempest*, which is certainly more subtle than most of the colonialist approaches we've grown accustomed to. Yet much is missing. (It is true that Greenblatt says in advance that this must be so, since he is deliberately working on the margins, and not on the main body, of the plays.)

Mullaney's book is Greenblattian, down to the use of an identical peripheral example, but it is by no means simply derivative, and in some ways it's more exciting than the master's. He studies the map of Elizabethan London; all the theaters are situated in the Liberties, sections that for historical reasons lay outside the control of the city yet on its very borders, for example just across the Thames at Southwark. The Liberties were places of misrule—the site of brothels, leprosaria, and so forth—deplored yet necessary, a sort of perpetual topographical carnival. The presence there of the theaters emphasized their marginality, which was like that of the actors' status: they escaped the penalties due to vagabonds only by being the nominal servants of noble households, permitted to exist on the civic margin by a court that was in this at perpetual odds with the city.

There is very little that is new in Mullaney's documentation. Only the interpretative dialect is new, offering a "rhetoric of space," along with a great deal of speculation about the symbolic topographies of other cities, and corralling into the project as many bizarre anecdotes as possible, including some rather amazing facts about the ritual dispatch of lepers to the Liberties and the theatrical treatment of criminals condemned to death. Mullaney believes that "we are developing a more public sense of culture and its ideological complexities, and along with it a more public sense of 'sense' itself, of meaning, its social contexts, and the interplay of dialectic that informs them both." And he, too, finds it easier to talk about the social contexts and the dialectical interplay than about the theater itself. The best of the book is in its treatment of the city and its Liberties, which means that it is itself, and perhaps appropriately, marginal.

There are ingenuities here, for instance about *Measure for Measure*, which I found unpersuasive. The claim that we are being offered for the first time something like a full study of the complex senses of the word "equivocation" in *Macbeth*—which goes beyond merely pointing out

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the references to the evasive answers permitted to Jesuits under torture—is, I'm afraid, simply untrue. Still, it must be said that Mullaney, like Greenblatt, compels one to think afresh about the strange position of a theater existing on the margin of an authoritarian society, and indeed about the whole question of the social and political contexts of works of art.

FRANK KERMODE

Frank Kermode is co-editor of *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (Harvard University Press).

POWER SHORTAGE

The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict From 1500 to 2000 by Paul Kennedy

(Random House, 677 pp., $24.95)

The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society Since A.D. 1000 by William H. McNeill

(University of Chicago Press, 406 pp., $20, $11.95 paper)

When I was a graduate student, the history of international relations was known as diplomatic history. It was concerned with war, peace, treaties, alliances, embassies, negotiations, and the like, and its source material was above all the written communications between center (Whitehall, Quai d'Orsay, Wilhelmstrasse) and agencies abroad. Diplomatic historians spent their time in archives looking for the secret motives and interests that would explain the play of the great game of power. Since every nation imposed restrictions on access to these documents (scholars usually had to wait 50 years or more before they were opened), every few years brought a new frontier of research and a new harvest of revelations. Some of the prizes, then, went to the swift, those quickest to read through and write up the new material. Though diplomatic history was perhaps the oldest, and in many ways the proudest, subfield of the discipline—much of what passed as historical method drew primarily on the techniques and experience of diplomatic historians—I can think of no other branch of historical research that knew so much of the journalistic rush to print.

Diplomatic history had its great themes and controversies. In my day, it was the origins of World War I, a topic much enhanced by the moral opprobrium attached to so costly, stupid, and unnecessary a conflict. The best and the brightest of the postwar generation spent a good part of their time testing and arguing the proposition of German war guilt. In this implicit trial proceeding, every bit of evidence mattered, every date, every word and marginal notation. The problem was that everyone could make a fairly reasonable case for his side: each scholar could point to a letter, a telegram, a note, a minute, a memoir, to show that each country should have done, or not have done, what it did.

Part of the problem lay in the ambiguity of human motives, in the multiplicity and the contradictoriness of interests, in the complexity of the issues. But part lay in a fundamental flaw of all traditional research in diplomatic history: the need to give full faith and credit to the documents insofar as these were the usual, confidential in-house communications. The underlying assumption was that one could believe Whitehall or the Wilhelmstrasse when it talked to its agents in the field. How could the system work otherwise? More important, how could diplomatic history work otherwise?

And yet there is good reason to believe that diplomats and statesmen are not above cooking the record, planting evidence, making a case in advance; and that some of the crucial communications of the period immediately before the outbreak of hostilities were designed precisely to put the adversary in the wrong. Thus the assessment of motives becomes difficult, if not hopeless. Which document is to be taken at face value, and which as an attempt to deceive credulous outsiders and scholars of the future?

Under the circumstances, it may be better to argue on the basis of material advantage and national interest than to build a house out of self-serving paper—which is just what the best of a new generation of scholars have been trying to do. We have two landmarks here: Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* and William H. McNeill's *The Pursuit of Power*. Both are tours de force in their ambition and in comparative scope; both take the whole world as their field of study and sweep across centuries; both eschew the day-to-day events for the long run; both try to understand the relations between countries in terms of power rather than diplomacy.

McNeill and Kennedy have come to the problem from very different perspectives. McNeill graduated, like Toynbee, from Greek history to world history, and went from death-by-disease to death-by-violence. After *Plagues and Peoples* (1976), on the international consequences of disease, he drew a parallel between the impact of microbes as they carry death from one society to another and the impact of arms (of the power to kill) as one society uses them against another—a conceptual leap via metaphor. Kennedy, by contrast, began as a traditional diplomatic historian, though always with a special interest in what he calls the "realities of diplomacy." In the space of a few years he has brought out a series of volumes that for quality and sheer productivity recall the extraordinary output of William Langer during the interwar years (Kennedy is clearly today's Langer, the leader of the field in this generation): *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery* (1976), *The War Plans of the Great Powers* (1979), *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914* (1981), and now this.

McNeill's book is the less systematic, the more discursive; in many ways it is an essay with footnotes, solid and sober, but lightened and enlightened by provocative asides. (Such as the footnote about the effect of war on France's precocious population control: could one explanation be the contact of hundreds of thousands of French sol-

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diers during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars with contraceptive-wise prostitutes?) The book is a study of the hardware and the software of violence: weapons, their production and their impact, the organization of armies to use them effectively. This story, as McNeill conceives it, is central to an understanding of the making of the modern world; and with this shift to the long-term aspects, he regenerates and relegitimizes the history of warfare and battles, long relegated by professional historians to the antiquarian dustbin. The emphasis is no longer on what the French like to depreciate as *l'histoire événementielle* or *la petite histoire*, not on the story of events, but on what lies behind them: the ever-advancing technology of death and its consequences. This approach does not make the story of battles and generals irrelevant; on the contrary, background analysis of this kind gives more meaning to the ebb and flow of narrative accounts.

MCNEILL, as is his wont, is ecumenical. He begins with a chapter on Asian and European (Mediterranean) military practice in antiquity; goes on to a long essay on what he calls "The Era of Chinese Predominance, 1000-1500"; and devotes the rest of the story largely to Europe. All aspects of history are relevant to his analysis, but he focuses on the interplay between the technological, the economic, and the political, and in the process we learn much about man's wondrous capacity for doing the wrong thing.

We learn, for example, about the stifling hostility of Chinese functionaries toward the subversive success of mercurial traders and thereby understand better why China never succeeded in converting its technological precocity into an industrial revolution: "They [these oversuccessful merchants] enjoy a luxurious way of life, living on dainty foods . . . owning handsome houses . . . adorning their wives and children with pearls and jades. . . . They despise agricultural pursuits and place high value on an idle living by trade." (Can't have that sort of thing.) Or about double-dealing by the British admiralty, determined to free itself of contractual commitments to the inventor of a technique for firing long-range naval guns while running at sea. The unforgivable sin of the inventor, A. J. H. Pollen, was that he wanted to make money from his system. So the Royal Navy clumsily pirated his methods (there's no pirate like an admiral) and eventually settled for an inferior system that allowed for accurate firing only if the vessel stayed on a straight course. As a result Britain may have saved money, at least in the very short run, but it certainly paid more in lives.

The one significant problem I have with the book comes when McNeill abandons his role as the omniscient historian to play the political pundit. Here he loses his touch, but not his tone of authority. The passage that most sets my teeth on edge comes toward the end of the book and offers some comparisons between the United States and the Soviet Union:

> Between 1946 and 1949 American countermoves consolidated a rival transnational economic and military power structure, somewhat disingenuously dubbed the "Free World." In many senses it was freer than the lands dominated by the U.S.S.R. Public expression of dissent was not systematically repressed; and labor, food, fuel, and raw materials were not allocated by government fiat on anything like the scale that prevailed in Communist-ruled lands. Individual choices about work, consumption, and leisure activities remained correspondingly broader than anything available within the Communist camp. Yet individual and small group choices operated in a society dominated by a new symbiosis of public and private administrators. Managed economies became normal in all industrially advanced countries; and as long as public consensus about the general goals of such management could be maintained, no one objected very vigorously. In other words, among the great majority of Americans, West Europeans, and Japanese, freedom collapsed into obedience and conformity to bureaucratically channeled behavior. The springs of obedience and conformity within the Communist lands were similar inasmuch as most Russians and East Europeans, together with the enormous Chinese population, also willingly accepted goals defined by their bureaucratic superiors and behaved accordingly.

That kind of tone-deaf noise, wrong in what it says and wrong in what it doesn't say, coming from a comparative historian of McNeill's caliber, is lamentable.

Kennedy's study is similar in conception, but different in execution. It is much more systematic, taking coherent time units beginning with the 16th century, and in each of these treating each of the major powers in turn from an economic as well as political and military perspective. Kennedy, like McNeill, begins by looking at the West against the

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Rest; but he begins later, in 1500, at a time, he says, when it was still "by no means obvious to the inhabitants of Europe that their continent was poised to dominate much of the rest of the earth." That observation may be true; but more important is the fact that by 1500, and contrary to the impression conveyed by Kennedy, Europe was already poised to dominate, both by its distinctively insatiable and enterprising appetite for wealth, and by a culture and technology that had decisively surpassed that of other civilizations in two crucial domains: the power to kill and the ability to learn and to diffuse learning. Curiosity and rational greed: the Chinese sent huge fleets into the Indian Ocean in the early 15th century and brought back giraffes and curiosa; they never went back. The Portuguese sent a handful of ships into the unknown to bring back the stuff of trade; they went again and again and brought everyone after them.

About the half millennium that follows, we are given a story in many ways familiar, but it is renewed by Kennedy's approach. We see the sequence of winners and losers, a parade of pretenders to power riding high and then humbled: the Spain of the Habsburgs; the France of the *Roi Soleil*; Britain, mistress of the seas and then workshop of the world; the hard-working, dissatisfied Germany of Bismarck and Wilhelm; the transcontinental frontier polities of the United States and the Soviet Union; the long-slumbering, barely wakened Chinese giant; the high-productivity, high-collectivity Land of the Rising Sun.

THE LESSONS? First, power rests on production. In the words of that old wise man of catch-up economics, Friedrich List: "War or the very possibility of war makes the establishment of a manufacturing power an indispensable requirement for a nation of the first rank." And then, the game of power can be very complicated, so that today's enemies may be tomorrow's friends. The allies who drove westward against Napoleon's fleeing *grande armée* were not happy to see France collapse to the point of turning the world over to Britain, just as the allies who had defeated Germany in the two world wars were not happy to see a vacuum in Central Europe inviting a westward shift of Russian power.

The one general aspect of the story that Kennedy should have done more with concerns the imponderables: those aspects of power that derive from social values and attitudes—the web of human links and loyalties, the sense of identity, the force of commitment and purpose. Armies need arms and bodies, but they also need morale and tenacity and fury. These are not easy to measure, nor easy to predict; as they used to say in the army, no one knows how he will behave under fire until he comes under fire. Still, there is much to be said on this subject from the historical record: the shift from mercenary to citizen armies; the consequences of defeat for the abolition of serfdom in Prussia (the war against Napoleon) and later in Russia (the Crimean War); the rise of nationalism and the invention of guerrilla in the context of wars of liberation; the implications of passion for the duration and cost of war; and so on.

LIKE MCNEILL, Kennedy ends his history with the here and now, with the great power rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. The adversaries are different, but the material base of power remains the same. The resources of today's nation-states far exceed those of their predecessors, but so do the costs of arms, to the point where it is not easy to know what is too little (not enough strength) or too much (strength to the point of enfeeblement).

Kennedy argues that the Soviet Union is severely handicapped by an inefficient, uncreative economic system that is capable of high performance in a few selected areas of armament (although it is regularly embarrassed by the poor performance of its equipment in the hands of more or less competent satellites), but only at great expense to the rest of the economy. There was a time when socialist thinkers wrote glowingly of the gain in rationality and the elimination of waste to be achieved by substituting planning for the market. Such promises sound hollow, if not silly, now. Command from above has proved extraordinarily inflexible, and the want of market signals (but would Soviet planners pay attention?) has led to egregious misallocations of resources. Soviet growth has slowed and, such as it is (who knows what it is? do the Soviets?), offers a spurious picture of numerical gains that do not translate into a higher standard of living. The demographic data do not lie, insofar as we can get them: alone among the advanced industrial societies, the Soviet Union has seen infant mortality increase and life expectancy diminish.

The Soviets, in an effort to compensate for their own inability to generate innovation, would buy, borrow, and steal technology. But as Kennedy points out, some of the most important areas of innovation, in particular the revolution in knowledge processing and communication, pose a social and political challenge to their system. In a country where the state has tried to suppress private access to printing and copying devices (in enterprises that must have them, these machines are controlled and operated by agents of the KGB), what does one do with word processors that can communicate with one another and turn out copyable disks?

Kennedy wrote his text before we were introduced to *glasnost*, the Soviet version of "let a hundred flowers bloom." But if he had been able to treat it, I think he would reserve judgment on its significance. He quotes Leonard Silk on the subject of the recent velleities of reform: "The Soviet Union needs its inefficiencies to remain Soviet." As Lenin put it, one must not allow even the village shop to exist, for even from such small beginnings there would unfailingly re-emerge that institutional expression of human greed and exploitation that we know as capitalism. And what is a regime profited, if it shall gain the whole world and lose its own soul?

BUT IF such a view of the Soviet Union is a source of reassurance to some, let them not be comforted. Kennedy moves on to the United States, and correctly points to the rapid erosion of American industrial and financial power: the shriveling of major branches of manufacture, including the smokestack industries ("You could not get on without an iron industry, a great engineering trade, because in modern warfare you would not have the means of producing, and maintaining in a state of efficiency, your fleets and armies," wrote W. A. S. Hewins in 1904, commenting on the decline of British economic supremacy); the dependency on imported electronic hardware; the enormous deficits on international account; the rapid shift from major creditor to the world's greatest debtor. Not a happy diagnosis, which shows all the signs of incipient decline.

To be sure, there is no lack of optimistic economists to reassure us about this decline. If some sectors are declining, we are told, others are growing; this is a natural, desirable aspect of any changing, growing economy. And although the trade deficit may be excessive, both in

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itself and for what it tells about American competitiveness (and foreign trade practices), any recourse to protection would be counterproductive and discourage efficiency; and besides (Kennedy does not really address this argument), there's nothing here that a cheaper dollar couldn't cure.

Yet Kennedy is concerned, and I would agree. There has never been a shortage of sanguine economists. In the light of past punditry, why put our trust in them? The story of British decline is a litany of alarm, but also of complacency by neoclassical theorists who have repeatedly and irrefutably proved that things are not so bad as they seem, that every decision makes sense, that every initiative or want of initiative has been rational, that as the ship has been gently sinking beneath the waves, every seaman has done his duty. And the aggregate data on America's performance relative to that of other countries simply cannot be blinked away. The dollar has lost half its relative value since early 1985, and the deficit on commodity account has (until this past December) steadily increased. Yes, there is a rate of exchange at which Americans will stop buying foreign goods and the rest of the world will buy up the United States, lock, stock, and real estate. But as we get there, we still may not be able to get them to take our manufactures, and our own standard of living will be lower. Besides, why is across-the-board better than selective protection?

AND WHAT OF Japan, exporter par excellence, the new workshop of the world? In 1951, Kennedy notes, Japan's GNP was equal to one-third of Britain's, one-twentieth of the American. It has long since passed Britain's; income per head is now as high as or higher than in the United States (though this is in part an artifact of the exchange rate); and if the dollar sinks to 100 yen, we may soon see a country with less than half our population pass us in total product. There have been many attempts to explain this extraordinary success to an envious world. Among the factors adduced: a strong work ethic (like something out of Max Weber), but characterized more by cooperation than competition; a strong thrift ethic (more Weber) that generates an extraordinary volume of savings for investment; fierce loyalty to firm and nation, and with that a preference for home products that makes import penetration extremely difficult; a wise and almost omniscient mode of indicative planning that pays attention to the market and gives room to free enterprise but steers it in the direction of a larger national purpose. Unlike technology, most of these things are not easy to imitate. Japan carries unique advantages into the competition for wealth, and these are rapidly bringing it to the front of the race.

Of course such success brings its own problems. Kennedy looks at some of these: the growing jealousy and resentment of other countries, exasperated by the impenetrability of the Japanese market (the Japanese are still the masters of non-tariff barriers to trade) and frightened by a growing economic dependency; the vulnerability to reprisal of an overwhelmingly export-oriented economy; and the discrepancy between Japanese economic and military power. To which I would add the internal penalties of intoxicating success: the growing temptation to reap the fruits, with all that that implies about work and saving habits; and the seduction of overweening self-esteem. The Japanese do not carry their success lightly. They are inclined to explain it deep down in terms of inherited virtue. They have overreached before; they may do it again.

IT IS instructive to compare these books' conclusions. McNeill is concerned with apocalypse, which makes him bold: nothing less, he says, than a "global sovereign power" will save us from nuclear holocaust. "When and whether a transition will be made from a system of states to an empire of the earth is the gravest question humanity confronts. The answer can only come with time." The alternative, he says, "appears to be sudden and total annihilation of the human species." This proposal is hardly new; yet one would have thought that McNeill's experience as a historian would have led him to look for solutions that are more feasible, and more compatible with human freedom.

Kennedy is less categorical, more prudent. Well aware that arms are more potent and the stakes correspondingly higher, still he writes on the assumption that the world will go on, taking its problems as they come. Like most historians, he is reluctant to venture into prescription and prediction; but the record as he states it is enough to show the folly of pride and the vanity of hegemony, which calls up its own nemesis. In the last analysis, he harks back to the

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wisdom of Bismarck, who knew how to live with power without using it: "To paraphrase Bismarck's famous remark, all of these Powers are traveling on 'the stream of time,' which they can 'neither create nor direct,' but upon which they can 'steer with more or less skill and experience.' " That's what we call defensive driving. In the absence of some larger vision, and of some real changes in the economic and political balance of power, that may be the best we can do. But given the quality of today's political "leadership," particularly in the United States, what a counsel of despair!

In the meantime, thanks to this extraordinary compendium, we are much the wiser, and that is what good history should be good for. Kennedy's book is at once new and traditional, for the intelligent layman but also for other historians, a book that treats a major theme with a rare combination of sweeping conception and care for detail, and above all with good sense and judgment. At a time when historians are celebrating or deploring the fragmentation of the discipline and its heightened (disproportionate? ideological?) concern for modest places and people, personal disorders, and everyday usage, both these volumes are a reminder that the great classic questions are worth doing and are doable. Weep not for Big History; it is alive and well in these pages.

DAVID S. LANDES

David S. Landes is professor of economics at Harvard University and the author most recently of *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (Harvard University Press).

SOUTHERN DISCOMFORT

Southern Family
by Gail Godwin

(Morrow, 540 pp., $18.95)

New Stories from the South
edited by Shannon Ravenel

(Algonquin, 247 pp., $16.95)

Tending to Virginia
by Jill McCorkle

(Algonquin, 312 pp., $15.95)

Ellen Foster
by Kaye Gibbons

(Algonquin, 146 pp., $11.95)

When the Harvard roommate of Faulkner's Quentin Compson says, "Tell me about the South, Quentin," he answers: "You can't understand it. You would have to be born there." But then he complies, with a story.

They told stories, those writers from a world and time that is all but gone—Faulkner, Katherine Anne Porter, Eudora Welty, Carson McCullers, Robert Penn Warren—because they were soaked in an oral culture that was still alive in memory. Listening to old stories was the means of shaping the new. Every oral culture—from Homeric Greece to the shtetl of Sholem Aleichem—has expressed itself in stories, told again and again, never in quite the same way. As the tales are told and retold, transmitted from generation to generation through the intimate immediacy of the human voice, they acquire the timeless nature of myth and are woven into what Welty has described as "a continuous thread of revelation."

Though Faulkner and the others of his generation were sophisticated literary artists, the wellspring of their imagination was the collective folk memory of their native region. Their stories were not meant, of course, to be read aloud, but reading them we can hear the timbre, the singular pitch of an individual voice—which may explain why so many Southern short stories take the form of a monologue. We get the feeling that Southerners will talk no matter what.

This addiction to the spoken word derives much of its vivacious energy from that other quintessential feature of traditional Southern society, the extended family. It's a bad sign when members of a family don't talk to each other. In Welty's *Losing Battles* (1970), a huge family reunion during a long Mississippi summer day becomes an irrepressible flood of talk by a chorus of kin: "More and more voices, all telling it—bragging, lying, singing, pretending, protecting, swearing everything into being, swearing everything away—but telling it." The need to "tell it" is the glue that holds the family together, the means of staving off the unbearable loneliness of silence.

For poets and novelists of the South, the telling of family tales led over time to the reinvention of history as the grandest story of all, the seductive myth of a harmonious and cohesive pastoral world whose communal and familial solidity had to be protected against the encroaching corruption of the industrial North and the worse evil of wage slavery. The so-called Agrarian writers and critics in the 1930s defiantly proclaimed their regional pride in *I'll Take My Stand*; though it was politically the most lost of causes, its emotional power persisted well beyond the demise of the movement.

But the loving, indestructible stability of the family, once the incontestable given in portrayals of "the Southern way of life," could also reveal itself to be a romantic facade. In the dark shadows of the family lay twisted passions that erupted in murder, madness, and suicide. The Gothic scent of blood and destruction inflamed the imaginations of Faulkner, McCullers, and the somewhat younger Flannery O'Connor, who saw the sinister shape of evil in grotesque deformities of body and spirit.

The present generation of writers has grown up in a regional world that bears little resemblance to Faulkner's. The paternalistic interdependence of blacks and whites has passed; the family farm has largely disappeared; the national culture is now more homogenized. Nor do the writers respond to Agrarian longings, since these are belied by everything in the immediate reality of the contemporary South. It is no accident that in Gail Godwin's *A Southern Family* the character endowed with the most clear-sighted intelligence—a woman who teaches history at a small Carolina college—is a great admirer of W. J. Cash, whose *Mind of the South* (1941) was a powerfully skeptical dissent, by a Southerner, from the prevailing myth.

What does unite the new novelists—so many of whom, perhaps significantly, are women—with the older generation is that enduring concern with the family. Welty, recollecting her snugly happy Mississippi childhood, found a crucial link between her upbringing amid several generations of loving devotion and the

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central theme of her work: "the structure of the family . . . its strength as a unit." No such source of literary inspiration offers itself to young writers who know all too well that the extended family as a bastion of nurturing affection has vanished. This pervasive fact of contemporary American society seems to be felt by Southerners with an especially haunting sense of loss.

More than half of the 15 stories in the collection edited by Sharon Ravenel deal with the breakup of a family, and the suffering (of children especially) that comes in its wake. There is no dearth of cruelty, alcoholism, and adultery, but they are not rendered with the lurid excess of melodrama. The writers set down what they see around them, not what they have extravagantly imagined or inflated. What is remarkably lacking in these stories, on the other hand, is regional particularity of habit and custom. We do not feel in touch with a uniquely Southern way of interpreting human experience. Racial tension and conflict are scarcely mentioned, and black characters are on the whole conspicuously missing, as though the past has left no imprint on the present. It is only the mordant recognition that the family is now in a severe state of disintegration that seems peculiarly Southern. Of course this is true of the country at large, but it seems to be a particularly bitter truth for Southerners.

IN GAIL GODWIN'S new novel we're soon alerted to the mournful undertone in the deceptively plain title, *A Southern Family*. For the family of Ralph and Lily Quick, hardly a haven of warmth and trust in the best of times, is shattered when the elder son, Theo, a feckless and charming loser, shoots and kills his girlfriend and then himself. To his parents, brother, and half sister, this dreadful act, the framework of the novel, is as inexplicable as it is irreversible. They struggle in their different ways to make sense of Theo's moment of truth, to understand how they might, however unwittingly, have contributed to his despair. What they have been unable to confront, until now, is the poisonous atmosphere of the Quick family, which Julia Lowndes (the admirer of W. J. Cash) shrewdly defines: "layer upon layer of debilitating resentments and intrigues that over the years had sapped the family members of their individual strength, and yet bathed them, as a unit, in a certain sinister charm."

Lily, the mother, is the kind of flattery, faded Southern belle who would sooner be crucified than tell anyone how old she is. But she has not always been a magnolia-scented stereotype. As a young mother widowed during the war, she earned her own living and possessed a vibrant independence soon sacrificed on the twin altars of sex and security when she married Ralph, a building contractor of much humbler origins than Lily's. When their sexual ardor burned out, Ralph's resentment of his wife's superiority soured into hatred that has become a way of life. Now only the fire of mutual loathing holds their misalliance in its scorching embrace.

Clare, Lily's daughter by her first husband, has become a successful novelist, but she is able to find her voice and vocation only by fleeing the crippling family tension and settling in New York. Home on a visit when Theo enacts his ghastly farewell, Clare tries to shrive herself in penitential dialogues with her conscience, tightening the screws of complicity. Along the way she also indulges in long and tiresome flights about the nature of fiction, her fervent liberalism, and much more. But her self-absorbed sincerity and painfully earnest self-probing never acquire imaginative energy, since they appear to derive not from a richly invented personality but from Godwin's urge to justify herself as a Southern writer who has shed all the tainted regional bigotries.

It's all the more curious, then, that although Clare fiercely admires Jesse Jackson and his "language of bold ideals," the blacks in this corner of North Carolina are virtually ignored in the story, though they must play some role in the life of this white Southern family. We are told that Lily's black masseuse, in this enlightened time, is her friend, not just a hired pair of hands; but this woman is the only member of her race introduced in the story. Indeed, the only characters who seem genuinely Southern, who could exist nowhere else in the country, are the nasty backwoods relatives of Theo's ex-wife, a squalid, hot-tempered clan of rednecks. Ironically, while Clare's liberal decency never rises above the dreary level of cliché, it is the hillbilly racists whom Godwin brings skillfully to life, perhaps because there she is not writing about herself.

When Jill McCorkle's first novel, *The Cheer Leader*, came out a few years ago,

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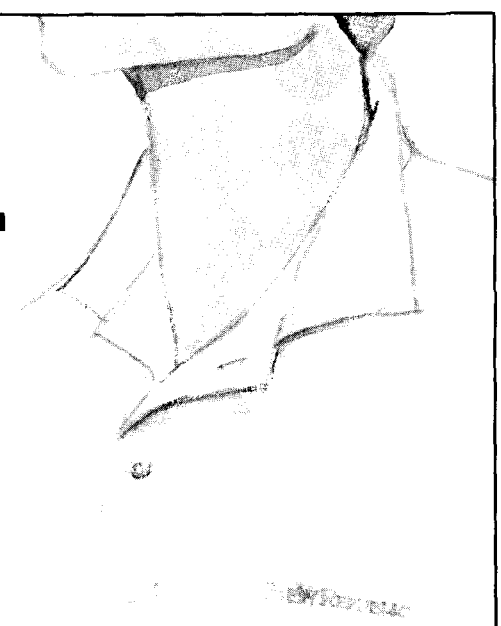

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one reviewer hailed the young North Carolina writer as the authentic voice of the New South, "with its subdivisions . . . and country music . . . and dope-smoking cheerleaders . . . its tricky new racial and social balances." Just what these new racial balances mean, how they affect the lives of black and white Southerners today, is what we hope to be shown by the younger novelists. *The Cheer Leader*, however, had nothing much to reveal about a changing society, since it turned out to be the familiar story of a small-town girl's sexual awakening in the '60s. It could just as easily have taken place in Idaho as in the South.

MCCORKLE'S new book, *Tending to Virginia* (a woman, not a place), sticks much closer to its locale. In one respect, at least, this is an unmistakable Southern story: the novelist is caught up in family matters, as usual. What McCorkle tries to capture is the last gasp of the old family network, whose women make a feeble stab at the traditional rituals of birth and renewal by huddling round the mother-to-be, entwining her in the continuity of generations that is the tree of life. But by now this tribal custom, like the women themselves, is a grotesque parody of the past.

What the novel in large part consists of—there is no plot worth mentioning—is generations of women talking their heads off about family secrets and scandals, rattling skeletons in dusty closets, again and again picking at the same old scabs of memory, jealousy, resentment, and nostalgia. At the center is hugely pregnant Virginia, who in a fit of pique toward her husband runs home to the ancestral South, "where the history and knowledge is [sic] solid."

Lying on her mother's sofa like a beached whale, Virginia is the captive audience of the women who shaped her life, most of them now grotesque ruins of their robust younger selves. The ancient grandmother, beloved by Virginia as that staple of Southern fiction, the wise matriarch with a bottomless apron pocket of love, advice, and recipes, is absolutely gaga. One great-aunt is also senile, another is fat and terminally depressed, and plays solitaire night and day. A foul-mouthed, much-divorced cousin brings up the rear. On and on they natter, family gossip interleaved with soap operas and TV stars, brand names and supermarkets: all the detritus of pop culture that the South today shares with all America:

> God, I envied those women their cans of Crisco. You and your mama have always used Crisco. Loretta Lynn, too, and look at her; she's done as good as a body can do. We might could have had money way back then but that wouldn't have eased my heart. "I'm freezing vegetables," I used to tell those women at the checkout when I unloaded box after box of baggies. That's not why I bought all those baggies. I bet you wondered why I bought all those baggies if you ever looked in my pantry and saw them.

There's nothing wrong with McCorkle's ear, but she gets so carried away by these torrents of trivia that we are sent into a coma of boredom. And she is so indifferent to literary shape, to the pace and the development a story requires, that in the end our pregnant heroine still hasn't given birth. Anyway the novel was long since stillborn.

IF MUCH Southern writing today lacks the identifying stamp of locality, there is no mistaking where Kaye Gibbons comes from, even if the word "South" is not to be found in her remarkable first novel, *Ellen Foster*. Gibbons wisely doesn't try to convey the accent of the 11-year-old orphan who tells her own grim story, but it's clear, even to a Northern reader, that we are listening to the voice of a backwoods Southern child. Ellen has a rare capacity for seeing through phonies and figuring things out, but Gibbons never allows us to feel the slightest doubt that she is only 11. Nor does she ever lapse into the condescending cuteness that afflicts so many stories about precocious children. This child does not swagger or perform; she does not invite congratulation. But she does want to tell us exactly what happened, and how she felt about it, and the humor of the telling—not always intentional, and never showy—is another reason that this child is utterly unlike such little monsters as Salinger's Teddy.

Ellen's story is horrifying, but it ends in quiet triumph because she is determined to outwit her predestined fate. In the startling sentence that opens the book, Ellen says: "When I was little I would think of ways to kill my daddy." Even when she is flung beyond the reach of hope, she refuses to give in. Her mother, a gentle invalid from a well-to-do family, had in youthful folly married a redneck lout. She goes to an early grave, by her own hand, leaving her daughter at the mercy of the drunken brute.

Ellen seems to have known from birth that everything was terribly wrong, that "my family was shaking itself to death." When her father mercifully drinks himself into permanent oblivion, a judge decrees that Ellen must go and live with her crazy maternal grandmother ("mama's mama" to Ellen, never Grandma), who blames the little girl for her favorite daughter's marriage and death. When "mama's mama" dies, Ellen is shuttled between one stone-hearted relative and another, and tries to console herself by making a list "of all that a family should have," because "I thought I would soon bust open if I did not get one of them for my own self soon."

WHAT CAN a helpless orphan do when, as she puts it, mimicking the judge's pomposity, he "talks about the family [as] society's cornerstone but you know yours was never a Roman pillar but is and always has been crumbly old brick"? But Ellen is one of nature's survivors. She knows what she needs, better than pesky psychiatrists asking dumb questions, and she finds her own way home. Hearing about a foster family in the town (whose name she takes to be Foster), she marches right over, pleads with the "new mama" to let her in, and becomes part of a family after all.

Safe at last, this white Southerner experiences an extraordinary change of mind and heart about her black schoolfriend Starletta (the name is a master stroke). Gibbons, unlike so many writers of the New South, doesn't evade the racism of Southern life, which she subtly reveals through the tenacious child's mind. Though Ellen is fond of Starletta, she won't drink from a "colored" glass or eat colored food or use the chamberpot that is all Starletta's family has in its tumbledown shack. Yet Ellen is able to figure out "by my own self" why such feelings aren't right, for she clearly sees it is her own white kin, not any blacks, who have made her life a misery. In a chilling passage toward the end of the book, Ellen explains that she's not the same girl who once wouldn't touch Starletta's biscuit even if she was starving:

> But I am old now I know it is not the germs you cannot see . . . that will hurt you or turn you colored. What you had better worry about though is the people you knew and trusted they would be like you because you were all made in the same batch. You need to look over your shoulder at the one who is in charge of holding you up and see if that is a knife he has in his hand. And it might not be a colored hand. But it is a knife.

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Ellen is not preening, or exhibiting her wisdom in the way of know-it-all prodigies. She is telling us that she has learned something important from ugly experience, and we believe her.

The voice of this resourceful child is mesmerizing because we are right inside her head. The words are always flawlessly right, helped along by the "old books" Ellen devours even when she has to admit "they're a little fancy for me." Ellen is an original who remains sweet and loving through the worst of times. Thus does Gibbons persuade us, as few writers can, that even a terrible childhood can be a state of grace.

In the writing of the New South, one is struck by the absence of that pride of place, of separateness and differentness, so strong in the great novelists of an older era. Not only is the pastoral myth gone, but the ability to create any myths at all is gone along with it. For the younger writers of the present day, the South is part of the mundane reality of the country at large. They still think of themselves as Southerners, but beyond their obsession with the family there is little that is distinctively Southern in their work.

In the 1980s these writers are telling us that the South has changed irretrievably, and so has its literature. But they have not yet found the language or the imaginative confidence that can do justice to the reality that engages them most fully. No longer enclosed in the rural isolation of the Southern past, theirs is a largely urban world with a different pace and rhythm, a different sense of neighborhood and region, and the attendant ills and favors of city life everywhere. One certainty remains: in America today, unhappy families are all alike.

PEARL K. BELL

Pearl K. Bell is a writer who lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

LAUGHTER AND FORGETTING

Visions: Stories and Photographs by Leonid Andreyev edited by Olga Andreyev Carlisle

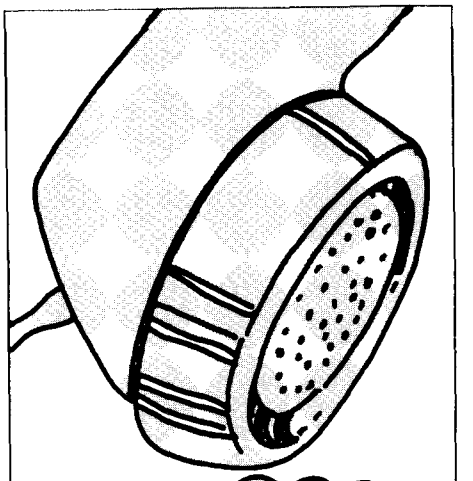
(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 325 pp., $21.95)

Leonid Andreyev (1871-1919), the grandfather of the editor of this volume, enjoyed considerable fame at the time of his death and was widely translated, especially into English. In 1919 he had sufficient international standing to issue from his place of self-exile in Finland an urgent "SOS" calling on the Western powers to liberate his country from the Bolsheviks who had usurped the Revolution.

His fame was in large part notoriety. Andreyev dealt with sexual themes more openly than almost any of his Russian contemporaries (prompting Countess Tolstoy on one occasion to write an outraged letter to the editor of the newspaper *New Time*), but in the typically gloomy atmosphere of Andreyev the sex was always perverted, diseased, and violent. In "The Abyss," reprinted here, a young couple are out walking in an unsavory neck of the woods when darkness overtakes them. They are attacked by three drunks who knock him out and rape her. When he recovers and finds her unconscious, he succumbs to the temporary madness that is seldom far behind any Andreyev hero and also rapes her.

Andreyev, like his father, was an alcoholic and on at least three occasions attempted even quicker forms of suicide. It is safe to assume that much of the pessimism for which his work is famous derives from the actual depression occasioned or reinforced by his illness. At any rate, what appealed to readers of his day as daring speculation about the fate of man in a hostile if not insane universe can often seem today, at its worst, like the boozy philosophizing of the drunk who can't be persuaded to go home.

Few writers of any age have surpassed Andreyev at depicting a mental state that recurs repeatedly in his stories: that transitional moment when a desperately sick mind, on the verge of snapping, expresses an intolerable apperception of horror in a maniacal laugh. Frenzied cachinnation turns up so regularly in his pages as to constitute something like Andreyev's



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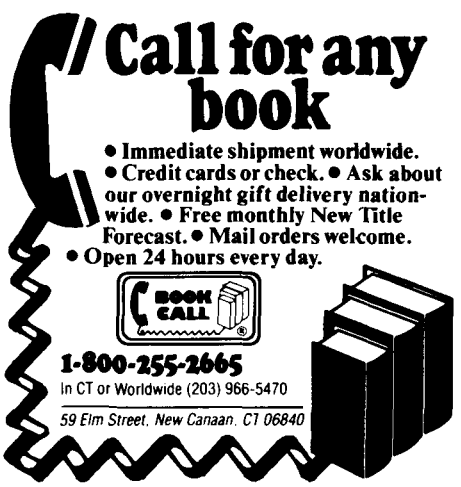
signature. The story "The Red Laugh," in which a kind of disembodied version of this convulsive response comes to stand for all the horrors of the contemporary battlefield, is in many ways the quintessential Andreyev fiction.

"The Seven Who Were Hanged" (1908) is the longest and most fully realized of the stories and deserves its place as a minor masterpiece of Russian letters. There are patches of ennui and the usual overwriting that marred most of Andreyev's work, but the characters are vividly individualized and endowed with a psychology that is all the more believable for being full of surprises.

The seven consist of a core group—five terrorists convicted of plotting to assassinate a government minister—and two others who are unrelated to each other or to the central five. One is a zoologically stupid Estonian laborer who has murdered his employer, bungled the rape of his employer's wife, and been captured while squatting behind the barn striking match after match in the attempt to set it afire; he knows only enough Russian to mutter over and over that he does not wish to be hanged. The other is a flamboyant Gypsy—not only a professional thief but also a kind of recreational murderer and certifiably mad.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It is highly effective to juxtapose these two purely accidental people to the cadre of terrorists, for whom they serve as a kind of control group, much as the two thieves crucified on the hill of Golgotha foregrounded the central figure.

The five are all more intelligent and human than the brutish Estonian and more substantial and serious personalities than the theatrically gaudy Gypsy, who seems half man and half poster. The Russian chauvinism is unattractive, of course, but no more so than the national chauvinism to be found in most other literatures of the time. Andreyev also skirts the danger of making his terrorists, three men and two women, merely emblematic figures; they are a plausible coalition of violent activists, who had, in 1908, between the revolutionary events of 1905 and 1917, many real-life counterparts.

It is the occasional manifestation of strong talent that makes one regret all the more the second-rateness of second-rate writers such as Andreyev. One is reminded of what might have been. The scene on the eve of the execution, in which the aged parents of one of the youngest and most appealing of the conspirators come to take their leave of him, offers an opportunity for bathos, but for once Andreyev restrains himself and produces a few pages that are as affecting as anything in Russian literature. Almost as good is a companion piece: the quarrelsome farewell of an ignorant old woman who cannot help intensifying the torment of her son's final hours.

Had Andreyev written consistently on this level of keen observation and stylistic frugality, he would have belonged in the front ranks of Russian prose. But his rule appears to have been that no noun should go unblunted by an adjective, and if possible by two or three or even four:

> As a candle fades in the brilliance of the sunrise, so her youth and life seemed dim and pale beside the magnificent, resplendent halo that was to illumine her humbled head.

> The dull lassitude that had wearied him for the last two years had vanished, and the heavy, cold, dead snake with its closed eyes and ghastly closed mouth had fallen from his heart.

Irritated by this adjectival glop, the reader risks losing all respect for the text and is tempted to a kind of unseemly heckling: "His heart? Just his heart? Not his *tender, young* heart? What's the matter? Getting tired?" (Since translators, including me, are by and large terrible adjective-mongers, I should note that the original Russian is the culprit here, not those who have all too faithfully Englished it.)

Compare Andreyev with contemporaries who were drawn to roughly the same themes. When he rode with Budenny's Cossacks through Poland, Isaac Babel, unlike Andreyev, actually witnessed the technicolor grue of decapitations and disembowelings, but he had the artistic tact to know that these scenes are more effective when detailed with a kind of Lutheran bareness. Babel presented the horror that Andreyev sought merely to invoke by one more superfluous qualifier. Andreyev too often thought he had failed of giving good measure until he had splashed the scene with the adjectival blood from pigs' bladders. Good Elizabethan stage practice, but not terribly satisfying today.

The title and subtitle of the book seem to promise a rough parity of interest between the prose and the photographs, but the "visions" caught on film scarcely deserve mention, let alone comparison with the stories. They are rather cheaply reproduced on the ordinary printed page, for one thing, and though obviously prized relics in a family album, they have little to offer the reader in search of striking visual images. The fact that all but three of the 18 pictures are adoring self-portraits, several in exotic costumes and histrionic poses, tells us rather more about Andreyev's general level of taste than he perhaps intended us to know.

CLARENCE BROWN

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CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 6*

tative of how the bulk of U.S. companies are run, and (2) Frank Carlucci "served ably at a variety of federal jobs ... where he never earned more than $60,000 a year."

The first assumption is so far off base as to be laughable, and the second is rejected by many folks (including this Republican) who don't feel that Mr. Carlucci is a bargain even at $40,000 a year. So, though I agree that Sears got a rotten deal with Carlucci at over a million dollars annually, for me, the rest of your argument "peters" out.

DOUGLAS F. GLANT
Seattle, Washington

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CAMPAIGN DIARIST

First Returns

THE 1988 CAMPAIGN woke up with a start last Monday night. The sitzkrieg ended; the blitzkrieg began. The Iowa caucuses put a shocking stop to a long, dreamy year in which every event or pseudo-event that came drifting into view could be analyzed and reanalyzed, and then the analyses could be languorously analyzed in their turn. There was no hurry, even when, as happened from time to time, the events themselves lurched quickly. Whatever the distraction of the moment, it could be savored at leisure like a glass of port. The candidates and their staffs, of course, were all frenetic activity; but they were seen, if they were seen at all, as if through the wrong end of a telescope, tiny figures gesticulating in the distance, their voices faint and tinny. Inconclusiveness had become a settled way of life. It had begun to seem as if things might just go on that way forever, that we might all grow old together, lulled into somnolence by the gentle rhythms of endless poll results and murmured complaints about the length of the campaign, the absurdity of the process, and the inadequacies of the candidates. Then, *blam!* Iowa. Suddenly we're at Mach 2, and the landscape is a giddy blur below. To paraphrase Bette Davis, Fasten your seat belts. It's going to be a bumpy ride.

ON THE DEMOCRATIC side, there were two unambiguous winners (Gephardt and Jackson), two ambiguous winners (Simon and Dukakis), one ambiguous loser (Gore), and two unambiguous losers (Hart and Babbitt). Among the losers, none showed his pain more chillingly than Gary Hart. From May to December, Hart was consumed by a single question, to run (again) or not to run. He never thought beyond that question. Eight weeks ago, when he made his existential leap into the void, he was beatific with relief. But in Iowa the pavement came up to meet him, and on caucus night his face was drawn into a mask of bitterness. In a tight, angry voice he told interviewers that his invisible showing didn't mean that much, that he'd do better in New Hampshire, that he'd only had a couple of weeks to campaign while everybody else had been at it for a year. The reality is that he has been campaigning for six years. New Hampshire will be the end for him. After that, for his sake, I hope he decides to forget about politics. He should move to L.A., where tolerance reigns and new beginnings are routine, there to become an entertainment lawyer or a movie producer.

BRUCE BABBITT deserved better than the nine percent of the vote Iowa gave him. His calls for fiscal honesty had won him, briefly, the attention of the voters; but once they were listening he simply repeated himself, instead of telling them what (other than a tidy balance sheet) the taxes he advocated might buy them. He too will be out after New Hampshire, but if the next administration is a Democratic one there surely ought to be a place for him in it. As for Al Gore, his Southern strategy had looked for a clean Simon victory. Gore is ill served by Gephardt's emergence (and by Robertson's—more conservative Southern Democrats will now cross over on Super Tuesday). Gore survives, but his immediate future is as cloudy as his long-term prospects (he won't be Hart's age, for example, until the year 2000) are bright.

THE BIG DEMOCRATIC winner, of course, was Richard Gephardt, a man who puts me in mind, unreasonably to be sure, of an earthling whose body has been taken over by space aliens. I keep expecting him to reach under his chin and peel back that immobile, monochromatic, oddly smooth face to reveal the lizard beneath. Perhaps the aliens are from the planet Bryan. How else to explain the fact that Gephardt, who until a few months ago was a sort of neoconservative neoliberal, has suddenly begun talking, in his slow, robotic voice, like a devotee of the cult of Populism? Whatever its provenance, though, Gephardt's message, as expressed in his extraordinarily skillful TV commercials and his own quick sound bites, is manifestly effective. The message is that our standard of living is going down, that foreigners and establishmentarians are to blame, and that we need new economic and trade policies to get better jobs at better wages. Not very uplifting, not very noble, but very, very clear.

THE CLARITY OF Gephardt's message, not the margin of his victory, is what makes him so formidable coming out of Iowa. Paul Simon's second-place finish was good but not quite good enough, and his backward-looking, Humphreyite campaign has stasis written all over it. Michael Dukakis acted triumphant on caucus night. His showing so far from home was strong, but not so strong as to tempt New Hampshire voters to take him down a peg. His record over the years is far more consistent than Gephardt's, but his campaign is intellectually and "thematically" adrift, wandering aimlessly from the Massachusetts Miracle to the Nicaraguan Nightmare by way of the New American Frontier. The danger, for Dukakis, is that he will imagine he can get by with more of the same. And Jackson? Well, he got five times as many white votes as black ones. He has made no blunders of the "Hymietown" variety, or any other variety. He will do better, maybe much better, than he did four years ago.

AMONG THE REPUBLICANS, meanwhile, George Bush was giving new meaning to the term Skull & Bones. That's why Al Haig, who amassed a vote total that would embarrass Lyndon LaRouche, looked so happy. Maybe Bush will recover, but, as he showed in 1984, he does not find adversity invigorating. He has become a voodoo doll for everything Republican voters dislike about Reagan and almost nothing that they admire. Like Mondale in '84, he has a safety net of money and organization, but unlike Mondale he commands little loyalty among his party's constituencies. New Hampshire suddenly yawns before Bush like a great black pit. Pat Robertson was a surprise, but he has peaked. Fortunately he comes with a built-in ceiling. On caucus night he accused Tom Brokaw of religious bigotry for referring to him as a television evangelist, a charge that is sure to baffle the infidel majority. His function in Iowa was to humiliate Bush. His function now will be to destroy the chances of his fellow right-wingers, Jack Kemp and Pete du Pont. Right now it looks a lot like Bob Dole.

DOLE VERSUS Gephardt? Dole versus Simon? Dole versus Dukakis? Gee, thanks, Iowa. Mario, Mario. Wherefore art thou, Mario?

H. H.

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"Breaking down the barriers to entry between banks and securities firms is of concern to all who are interested in the health and dynamic vitality of our economy... Glass-Steagall is a protectionist dinosaur. A fossil held over from a bygone era. The American people deserve better."

SENATOR WILLIAM PROXMIRE

"(Glass-Steagall reform) would allow lower costs and expanded services for consumers... through enhanced competition in an area where additional competition would be highly desirable... Securities activities of banking organizations can provide important public benefits without impairing the safety and soundness of banks."

ALAN GREENSPAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE

"The real choice in the long run... is between piecemeal bank deregulation by the states and uniform national reforms buttressed by increased regulatory scrutiny. Sooner or later—preferably sooner, a majority of Congress will understand that this is no choice at all and pass something like the Proxmire plan."

THE NEW YORK TIMES

"Whatever the original value of the commercial/investment bank distinction, the markets have eroded it... Bankers have responded to (their) loss of business in a healthy way. They don't want protection, they want freedom to compete. Congress has been the stumbling block."

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

"(There is an) increasingly urgent need for fundamental reorganization of the whole financial sector ...banking, securities, the works. Congress usually prefers to move one step at a time in a subject as complex as this one, and that's often the wiser choice. Here the circumstances require change that is profound, rapid and sweeping."

THE WASHINGTON POST

"Banks and other financial institutions ought to be able to compete head-to-head on a full range of products. By continuing to succumb to the special interest groups and to delay, Congress... is only hurting consumers and the competitive stance of a vital industry."

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"One thing is clear... whatever relevance the Glass-Steagall Act had in the past, today it is serving to undermine the safety and soundness of the financial system by preventing it from responding to the rapid changes in financial markets."

SENATOR JAKE GARN

SOME OF AMERICA'S BRIGHTEST MINDS ARE CALLING FOR ENLIGHTENED BANKING LAWS!

Key members of Congress, the Reagan Administration, the Federal Reserve Board, and major newspapers all across the country are calling for action to modernize our banking laws.

Far reaching legislation is desperately needed to allow our nation's banks to keep pace with the big changes that are taking place in the financial industry at home. And all over the world.

Banks Are the Backbone of the Financial System.

Unless they are permitted to offer the financial products today's customers want, banks will soon be unable to compete. Insurance companies, stock brokers, and even retailers are now aggressively selling what used to be exclusively banking products. Yet, banks can't offer most new products because of an entanglement of outdated laws. Some, like the Glass-Steagall Act, date back to the 1930's.

It's Now Up to Congress.

Congress is now considering legislation to modernize our financial system—legislation such as S-1886, the Financial Modernization Act, sponsored by Senators Proxmire and Garn. And, HR-3800, which is a comparable bill on the House side. Only if such legislation is enacted, will banks be able to continue their critical role of serving businesses, consumers and their communities.

Our country needs a strong, safe, and competitive financial system now, more than ever. The Congress should enact progressive legislation to assure that we have such a system.

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